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COLUMBIA
Woman returns
Olympic wallet
becomes hero

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Hizbollah claims bombing of Israeli patrol

BEIRUT (AFP) — Iranian-backed Hizbollah guerrillas said they launched a bomb attack against an Israeli patrol in South Lebanon early Saturday, destroying a tank and causing casualties. There was no independent confirmation of the attack which Hizbollah said occurred in the eastern sector of Israel's self-declared "security zone" in South Lebanon. A spokesman for Israel's proxy South Lebanon Army (SLA) said it had nothing to report. But a spokesman for Hizbollah said the group's armed wing, the Islamic Resistance, detonated a bomb in the path of an Israeli patrol after midnight Friday. "An (Israeli) Merkava tank was destroyed and its occupants killed or wounded," the spokesman told AFP. On Thursday two Hizbollah guerrillas were killed in a clash with Israeli troops inside the buffer strip, in a village near the international border.

Jordan Times

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Pipe bomb kills 2, injures 100 in Atlanta Olympic Games resume despite blast

ATLANTA (Agencies) — A pipe bomb in a park killed two people and injured 110 on Saturday in a bloody attack on revellers at the Atlanta Olympics which U.S. President Bill Clinton condemned as an "evil act of terror."

"We will spare no effort to find out who was responsible for this murderous act. We will track them down. We will bring them to justice," a grim-looking Clinton said in a statement at the White House.

"The bombing at the Centennial Olympic Park this morning was an evil act of terror," he said. "It was an act of cowardice that stands in sharp contrast to the courage of the Olympic athletes."

World leaders condemned the bombing. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, described the explosion as a "cowardly act" in cables to Mr. Clinton and Vice President Albert Gore. Russian President Boris Yeltsin denounced it as "barbaric" and urged joint action to fight terrorism. Pope John Paul prayed for the victims.

The International Olympic Committee and the local organisers of the world's biggest sporting event pledge the Games would go on.

Some 10,000 athletes from a record 197 countries have come to Atlanta for the games. Competition resumed as scheduled on Saturday but flags flew at half mast and a moment's silence was observed at each Olympic venue.

The explosion ripped through central Centennial Park

ough central Centennial Park about 1.30 a.m. on Saturday as hundreds partied at a rock concert.

Dramatic film of the blast showed people running for cover, others recoiling and ducking as the bomb exploded and brown smoke rose in the air.

Witnesses said many of the injured had suffered severe lacerations when they were hit by shrapnel.

Mr. Clinton said security forces were clearing the area — a park in central Atlanta which is the main entertainment venue for visitors — when the bomb exploded. The toll could have been much worse, he said.

One of the dead was a Turkish cameraman working at the games. Colleagues of 40-year-old Melih Uzumyol at Turkish state television said he collapsed near the scene of the blast.

The other dead person was reported by local media to be an unidentified woman.

"The FBI has confirmed that the explosive device was a pipe bomb," a Justice Department spokeswoman said in Washington.

A warning was also phoned to the Atlanta police at the time of the blast, a Justice Department official said. The call was made from a pay phone near the scene of the blast and a tape of the message was being analysed.

Security experts said the use of an unsophisticated pipe bomb would make it less likely that the Atlanta attack was

carried out by international extremist groups.

Three members of a right-wing Georgia militia were arrested in April amid reports that they intended to attack the games.

All were from rural Georgia. They allegedly belong to a militia group calling itself the 112th Regiment, militia-at-large for the republic of Georgia.

They face trial on charges that they conspired to make pipe bombs and planned to stockpile explosives, ammunition, weapons and other military equipment for a terror campaign.

The organisers of the games had proudly boasted that Atlanta would be the safest place on earth. One of America's most violent cities was being guarded by 30,000 security personnel, the largest peacetime force in U.S. history.

Security fears heightened two days before the games when an explosion downed a TWA Jumbo Jet shortly after it had taken off from New York en route for Paris. All 230 people on board were killed. The cause of the explosion remains unknown.

Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) spokesman Woody Johnson said of the Atlanta blast: "The FBI will take the lead in the investigation. We will consider it an act of terrorism until information should arrive to the contrary."

Billy Payne, the real estate lawyer who brought the

games to Atlanta, pledged that their spirit would not be crushed.

But security was tightened even further and the area around Centennial Park remained closed off on Saturday morning as investigators combed the area for evidence.

Hardly missing a step, the games returned to the business of gold, silver and bronze Saturday, just hours after a terrorist bomb hit at the heart of the world's greatest sports spectacle.

"We are all agreed — the games will go on," Mr. Clinton said in a nationally televised news conference, echoing an earlier statement by IOC Director General Francois Carrard.

The shock of the blast rippled through all sports and venues.

Despite his historic achievement, Mr. Redgrave sounded like someone who wanted to get as far away from competition as possible.

"I've had enough. This is definitely it. If anyone sees me near a boat, they can shoot me," he said.

A calm-voiced telephone caller warned an emergency telephone operator Saturday of the impending explosion, a Justice Department official said.

Despite the call, the open-air concert site was not evacuated in time.

The caller spoke "in a calm voice," according to the official, who requested anonymity.



An injured woman is tended to early Saturday following an explosion at the Olympic Centennial Park in Atlanta (Reuters photo)

The call, apparently from a man, reached the operator at 1:07 a.m., a law enforcement official said, adding "the caller said a bomb would go off in Centennial Park in 30 minutes." A bomb went off in that park at 1:25 a.m.

The call "was strictly a warning" accurately predicting the site of the blast, a second federal law enforcement official said, requesting anonymity. The caller did not give a name or identify any group or organisation claiming responsibility for the bombing.

The second law enforcement official said.

The call to 911 — the emergency telephone number used throughout the United States — did not provide enough advance warning to dispatch a bomb squad, the first official said, but coincidentally a bomb squad had already been summoned to the site by someone who spotted an unattended bag, that ultimately blew up.

Bomb squad officers who examined the bag quickly before beginning an evacuation saw three pipes inside, but the pipes may all

have been part of one bomb rather than three separate ones, the first official said. The 911 call came from a pay telephone near a hotel about two blocks from the location of the explosion, he said.

FBI agents obtained the tape of the call and were sent to dust the pay telephone for fingerprints. The timing of the call was so close to the explosion that emergency operators did not have enough time to relay the contents to police before the bomb went off, the Justice Department official said.

GIA says leader killed

PARIS (R) — Algeria's fundamentalist Armed Islamic Group (GIA) said in a statement on Saturday that its leader Djamel Zitouni, alias Abu Abderrahmane Amine, was killed on July 16, near Medea, 120 kilometres south of Algiers.

A four-page statement in Arabic, received by an international news agency in an Arab capital, said: "Our brother Abu Abderrahmane was killed after he fell in a trap near Medea on July 16 before sunset... Two other brothers who accompanied him were also killed."

The statement gave no other details.

The statement could not be immediately authenticated, but it bore the same stamp and signature as previous statements by the GIA that had proved genuine.

The GIA has claimed responsibility for some of the most violent actions in the four-year-old struggle between Muslim militants and Algerian authorities, including kidnapping and slitting the throats of seven French trappist monks in March 1996 and killing 12 Croat workers in their camp in December 1993.

The group was also responsible for the 1994 Christmas eve hijack of an Air France Airbus and a suicide bomb in central Algiers in January 1995 in which at least 42 people were killed and about 300 wounded.

Palestinians condemn Israel for permitting Jews in Al Aqsa

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — The Palestinian National Authority condemned Israel Saturday for allowing Jewish activists this week to enter the site of the Al Aqsa and Dome of the Rock mosques in Jerusalem.

"This is an irresponsible decision and a challenge for Muslim emotions and it is a violation of all the (Israel-Palestinian) agreements," said a statement from the office of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

The site, holy to both Muslims and Jews, is one of the most sensitive spots in the Israeli-Arab conflict.

The statement followed a decision by Israel Thursday to allow Jewish activists onto the site after they won support from the supreme court.

Mr. Arafat convened his cabinet and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leadership late Friday night and issued a statement Saturday condemning Israel for the decision.

Nabil Shaath, Palestinian minister of international

affairs, met Saturday with representatives from Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco and Qatar to discuss the issue.

"This Israeli violation in Jerusalem at Al Aqsa not only endangers the peace process, but also threatens an Arab and Muslim explosion," said a statement from Dr. Shaath's office. "We see this violation as very serious and very dangerous."

Jews believe the place is the site of the ancient Jewish temple, whose destruction by the Romans in 70 A.D. was commemorated on Thursday, as the ninth of Av in the Hebrew calendar. Muslims know it as Haram Al Sharif in Arabic, or noble enclosure, and believe it is the place where the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven.

On Thursday, commemorating the temple's destruction, Jews were allowed onto the site in pairs and with police escort. They were not allowed to pray and police confiscated all religious paraphernalia from visitors before they entered. Muslims at the

site viewed the act as a provocation and many chanted "Allahu Akbar" or God is great, in protest.

Israel's supreme court last year overturned a ban on Jews visiting the site. Police had imposed the ban after a 1990 riot during a Jewish holiday left 17 Palestinians dead and more than 170 wounded.

However, a ban on Jews praying on the mount, which is anchored in Israeli law, remains in effect.

Meanwhile, Mr. Arafat warned on Saturday against moves by Israel's new right-wing government to expand Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

"This policy will only increase tension," Mr. Arafat said during a joint meeting of the Palestinian government and the executive committee of the PLO.

Mr. Arafat, quoted by the official Palestinian news agency Wafa, said plans to expand settlements and build by-pass roads on the West Bank and Gaza Strip were

"clear violations of the accords and commitments concluded with the Israeli government."

The Israeli government had been due to hold its first debate on the settlements at Friday's weekly cabinet meeting, but it was postponed until next week.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is aiming initially to increase the size of existing settlements on the West Bank and give fresh impetus to building by-pass roads for settlers around areas under Palestinian self-rule, his aides said.

The programme is a significant turnaround from the policies of the previous Labour-led governments which from 1992 under the leadership of Yitzhak Rabin and his successor Shimon Peres froze all settlement building except around Jerusalem.

Mr. Arafat leaves on Sunday for a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia, his media adviser Nabil Abu Rdaiah said.

U.S. sanctions 'big mistake' — Velayati

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati on Saturday described as a "big mistake" a new U.S. law slapping sanctions on foreign companies investing in Iran's oil and gas sector.

"If the United States thinks it can force Iran into following its policies through pressure, it is completely mistaken," Mr. Velayati told the government daily newspaper, Iran. "This is a big political mistake for America."

The White House said Wednesday that President Bill Clinton would sign into law a bill passed by Congress that punishes foreign firms investing in the petro-

leum and gas industries in Iran and Libya.

The U.S. House of Representatives voted unanimously in favour of the Iran and Libya sanctions act on Tuesday after the Senate last week stiffened provisions of the legislation dealing with Libya.

The bill calls on the U.S. president to slap sanctions on foreign companies which invest \$40 million or more annually in the oil and gas sectors of Iran and Libya.

Under the measure, Washington can impose any two of a menu of six sanctions on violators including import and export bans, denial of U.S. bank loans and export-

import bank credits and exclusion from U.S. government contracts.

Mr. Clinton slapped a U.S. embargo on Iran in June 1995 as part of the U.S. drive to isolate Tehran for its alleged support of terrorism, but European countries have refused to follow the U.S. lead.

Iran's judiciary chief, Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, charged on Friday that the U.S. law contradicted international criteria.

"International law does not allow the United States to impose its point of view on independent states," he said predicting this new sanction against Iran "will also fail."

Meanwhile, Mr. Velayati said on Saturday that he expected Iran to have a "more constructive" dialogue with the European Union in the future.

The "critical dialogue with EU," under way in the past three years, "is a diplomatic success for Iran and it could be turned into more constructive talks in the future," Mr. Velayati told the government daily newspaper, Iran.

"The Europeans do not want to see the United States become the only power in the Middle East, and that's why they pursue the talks with Iran as the most powerful and stable country in the region," he added.

Egypt releases 283 'repentant' militants

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt released 283 "repentant" Muslim militants from prison on Saturday on the occasion of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad after they abandoned extremist ideas, police sources said.

It was the 12th group of repentants freed since 1994, totalling around 2,500 released prisoners.

The 283 released Saturday, who hailed from Cairo, the northern delta and south Egypt, were not involved in attacks on civilians or police, the sources said.

Most of them belonged to the Gamaa Islamiya, the main militant group waging an armed campaign against the government which has left 1,030 dead since 1992.

Each "repentant" was given 200 Egyptian pounds (\$60) upon release, the sources said.

The interior ministry has organised over the past two years a regular programme in which religious scholars from Al Azhar, Sunni Islam's highest authority, meet with Islamist prisoners to convince them to abandon "extremist thought."

The Gamaa and other militant groups seek the overthrow of the government as "anti-Islamic."

Meanwhile, suspected militants shot dead an Egyptian accused by extremists of informing for police and wounded his brother in an attack on Saturday, police said.

The attack took place in agricultural fields outside Al Sinbelwain village in northern Minya province, 280 kilometres south of Cairo, police said.

On the Occasion of
The Prophet's Birthday



ARAB BANK

has the honour to convey to

HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN

and to the Jordanian People

Its felicitations and best wishes

Britain, U.S. urge Turkey to extend Kurdish 'safe haven'

LONDON (Agencies) — Britain on Saturday joined the United States in urging Turkey to renew an agreement giving protection to Kurds in northern Iraq.

The new Turkish parliament must vote by the end of this month on whether to extend Operation Provide Comfort, under which a Western allied air force has been using Turkish air bases to protect Kurds in Iraq since the end of the 1991 Gulf war.

"We endorse the U.S.

statement issued today on Operation Provide Comfort. We strongly support Operation Provide Comfort which continues to serve the purposes for which it was established," the foreign office said in a statement.

British Prime Minister John Major played a major role in setting up the so-called "safe haven" for Kurds to protect them against possible attack from the Iraqi army.

But many Turkish mem-

bers of parliament say the U.S.-led force has inadvertently helped the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), which wants autonomy or independence in southeast Turkey, to establish itself in northern Iraq.

A White House statement on Friday said the region should not be used to support terrorism.

"Northern Iraq should not serve as a sanctuary for PKK activities, nor should the PKK receive support from any quarter," it said.

Washington "will not support an independent status for northern Iraq," the White House said in a statement Friday.

Armed PKK members use northern Iraq as a sanctuary from which to strike at the Turkish military in an effort to force the creation there of an independent Kurdish state.

"The U.S. supports Turkey's efforts to deal with the threat posed by the (PKK) terror," the White House said.

Eleventh inmate dies in Turkey death fast

ISTANBUL (R) — Three more leftist Turkish prisoners died on Saturday, bringing to 11 the toll from a hunger strike and raising the prospect security forces would intervene.

Human rights activists said Osman Akgun, a 32-year-old urban guerrilla, starved himself to death in Istanbul's Umraniye prison. He was the eleventh inmate to die in the 69-day fast.

Earlier, Yemilha Kaya died in Istanbul's Bayrampasa prison. Kaya, the second woman to die, had been on trial for membership of a leftist urban guerrilla group. Hicabi Kucuk, in his mid-20's, died in Bursa prison, in western Turkey.

The state-run Anatolian news agency reported that one man in Gebze prison, near Istanbul, had been taken to hospital and was undergoing medical treatment.

Rights activists said the protest would go on. "There is no change, there is no progress, but they are not giving up the hunger strike," a spokeswoman from the Independent Human Rights Association said.

Officials say negotiations with around 300 fasting leftists were deadlocked over demands that 70 to 80 inmates be transferred to Bayrampasa from Eskisehir high security prison, dubbed the coffin for its small, single-person cells. The inmates also demand

an end to maltreatment and to a policy of dispersal that they say cuts them off from each other, family and lawyers.

"I think the situation is hopeless," said well-known leftist musician and columnist Zulfu Livaneli, who met the justice minister and prosecutors in a bid to mediate the crisis.

"I get the impression the security forces are ready to interfere. The army also is willing to do this," he told Reuters.

"It will be very dramatic because there are 820 people in (Bayrampasa) prison all together. It will be a catastrophe."

Justice Minister Sevkettin Kizilirmak, under intense domestic and international pressure to resolve the crisis, has already warned that inmates are armed and organised and that any intervention would result in many deaths.

However, Mr. Kizilirmak threatened on Friday to act unless the inmates back down. "This is our last call. I am calling on them for the last time to give up their action and group executions," he told a news conference.

Ercan Kanar, head of the Istanbul branch of the Human Rights Association, told Anatolian he had offered to mediate in the affair.

"More or less all the people on the death fast are in serious and worsening situ-



Demonstrators lay handcuffed on the ground in Cologne, Germany, Saturday after German riot police broke up an illegal protest in support of a hunger strike by prisoners in Turkey over living conditions (Reuters photo)

ation," said an official with the Human Rights Association in Istanbul.

The hunger strikers are refusing medical treatment. The protest has provoked outrage from Western allies who have in the past criticised Turkey's human rights record.

Rights lawyers called for resignation of Minister Kizilirmak, a member of the

Islamist wing of the coalition which took office one month ago, mid-way through the protest.

"The justice minister... must immediately step down. He should not do this job while people are dying in jails," the Human Rights Association said in a statement on Saturday.

Around 1,000 people, including writers and

actors, crowded along Istanbul's central Istiklal street to protest the hunger strike, demanding Mr. Kizilirmak solve the problem or resign.

Many of the protesters carried black-and-white posters of those who died in the strike.

"I am ashamed to be part of a nation with such a state," a woman told the

crowd, saying her daughter was on hunger strike.

European Commissioner Hans van den Broek wrote to Turkish Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller, urging her to prevent further deaths, in what diplomats saw as a thinly veiled reminder of Ankara's promise to improve its rights record in exchange for a lucrative customs deal with Europe.

Rockets hit Kabul as peace envoy begins mission

ISLAMABAD (R) — Rebel rockets killed at least two people in the Afghan capital Kabul on Saturday as a new U.N. envoy arrived in the eastern town of Jalalabad to begin a peace mission, a Pakistan-based Afghan news service said.

At least three rockets fired from the rebel-controlled areas south of Kabul hit the diplomatic Wazir Akbar Khan district and other areas, wounding six other people, the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) reported.

Peace envoy Norbert Holl earlier flew into the Nangarhar province capital Jalalabad, saying he had brought no new formula for ending the country's conflict.

The rocket fire came despite an appeal from Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar on Friday to the rebel Taliban Islamic militia to halt attacks on Kabul and adopt the path of dialogue and understanding.

"If you want the post of prime minister or president then you can raise this matter on the conference table," the official Kabul radio quoted Mr. Hekmatyar as telling Taliban in a speech at a prayer meeting at Kabul's Pol-e-Kheshti Mosque.

Mr. Holl, a German diplomat, was received by local officials as he arrived at Jalalabad from the Pakistani capital Islamabad on his first tour after being appointed to the job, AIP said.

He quoted him as telling reporters he had brought no new formula for peace

among warring Afghan factions he is due to meet in the coming days.

Mr. Holl, who arrived in Pakistan on Tuesday, later met Acting Nangarhar Governor Mohammad Asif, who assured him full cooperation in the peace process, AIP said.

The envoy heads for the rebel-besieged Kabul on Monday for talks with President Burhanuddin Rabbani and then goes to opposition-ruled northern town of Mazar-i-Sharif on Wednesday.

Later he plans to visit the southern town of Kandahar, the headquarters of the powerful Taliban militia, and Bamian, in central Afghanistan, base of the opposition Hezb-i-Wahdat faction of the minority Shi'ite Muslims.

Mr. Holl succeeds former Tunisian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mestiri, who resigned as U.N. envoy in May after more than two years of abortive efforts to forge a settlement.

He told a news conference in Islamabad on Thursday that he saw hope in some recent developments that could help bring peace to Afghanistan.

He cited a recent peace pact between Mr. Rabbani and his former rival and now Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a new alliance of opposition factions led by northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum and a new interest in the peace process in the United States and Russia.

Somali faction fighting leaves 21 dead, 36 wounded

MOGADISHU (AFP) — At least 21 people were killed and 36 wounded in heavy fighting west of Mogadishu overnight, according to reports Saturday, but confusion reigned over the reported capture of Ballidogle airport by joint forces opposed to warlord General Mohamed Farah Aidede.

Fighting continued along the Ballidogle road between Gen. Aidede's United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance (USC/UNA) faction and the opposing alliance of self-styled Somali interim President

Ali Mahdi Mohammad. Independent sources said heavy fighting was raging at Waramahin and Tihisile villages on the road to Ballidogle, Tihisile is about 30 kilometres east of Ballidogle.

The sources said each side had captured two technicals (armed wagons) during heavy fighting that had left 21 people dead and more than 36 wounded.

Fighting died down in the Somali capital itself, where only light exchanges of gunfire were heard in the Medina and Bosnia districts, indicating

the focus of battles had shifted to the Ballidogle road.

Three radio stations operating in the capital in support of rival factional leaders have continued to broadcast contradictory claims over who controls the airport.

Quoting Gen. Aidede's deputy minister for disarmament and rehabilitation, Hassan Mohamed Qalad, Radio General Aidede said the airport "had never fallen to Ali Mahdi's forces or to any other group," and was open for all traffic.

Qalad said Gen. Aidede's government would guaran-

tee safety for all its users, but admitted that "some bandits had temporarily disrupted the smooth running of the airport by attacking its vicinity."

But Ali Mahdi's Radio North Mogadishu and Radio-South Mogadishu of Osman Hassan Ali Atto, Gen. Aidede's former financier turned foe who now heads a faction within the USC/UNA, simultaneously claimed total victory.

Ali Mahdi's radio also claimed allied forces were in full control of Argoe district, 30 kilometres west of Mogadishu, a claim strongly disputed by truck

drivers and travellers arriving here early Saturday.

A spokesman for Ali Mahdi said the airport would be reopened in the next 18 hours after all security arrangements have been assured, and that "the forces would oversee security for commercial planes and passengers."

The spokesman also said high airport taxes previously imposed by Gen. Aidede will be stopped until a broad-based government has been formed in Somalia.

'S. Arabia shuts Sudan opposition office'

KHARTOUM (R) — Saudi Arabia has shut down a Sudanese opposition office in Riyadh and banned all activities by opponents of Sudan's Islamist-backed military government, a Khartoum newspaper said on Saturday.

The government-owned weekly Al-Nasr said the decision was taken by Saudi Arabia's King Fahd. "The kingdom of Saudi Arabia decided to shut down the sole office of the Sudanese opposition in Riyadh last week and banned any activities of the Sudanese opposition," it said.

Saudi government officials could not be reached for comment on the report. Earlier this year Sudan said it expelled Saudi dissident Osama Bin Laden, accused by Arab and Western governments of financing militants seeking to topple the governments of Algeria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

South Egypt residents want government to ban 'offensive' comedy tape

CAIRO (AFP) — Residents of south Egypt sharing the name "Haridi" have demanded the banning of a comedy tape because of "offensive" jokes, the government daily Al-Akhar reported Saturday.

The tape of songs by a group of mostly unknown singers relates the romantic adventures of a man named "Haridi", a common name among "Saidis", the residents of the "Said", south Egypt.

A number of people named Haridi have written to Culture Minister Farouq Hasni to protest against the tape, Al-Akhar reported.

"Saidis" are the traditional butt of a vast number of

Egyptian jokes depicting them as stupid hicks and sexual marvels.

In their letters to the minister, the Haridis complained in particular of one song in which the hero Haridi asks in a south Egypt accent for a back rub saying "Saidi girls are known for being tough".

One Haridi family has raised a court case to win a banning of the tape, which has made large sales throughout the country, the paper said.

State-owned television and radio have banned since the beginning of the 1990s the broadcast of comic monologues and jokes knocking Saidis.

Perry visit to Saudi postponed by Atlanta bombing

RIYADH (AP) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry has postponed a visit to Saudi Arabia during which he was expected to propose ways for Riyadh to help pay for increased security measures for U.S. troops based here, official Saudi sources said Saturday.

Mr. Perry had been expected to arrive late Sunday or early Monday, but his visit was delayed

due to a bomb explosion early Saturday in Atlanta's Olympic Park that killed two people and wounded more than 100, the sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Perry was to have laid out proposals for increasing security following the June 25 bombing of a U.S. military housing complex near Dhahran in which 19 Americans were killed, a

U.S. military official said Thursday.

Five Americans were also killed in the November bombing of a U.S. military training mission in the Saudi capital.

The Saudi sources said no firm date has been set for a rescheduled Perry visit, but noted that it could come some time next month.

Mr. Perry had been expected to fly to Riyadh

from Australia, where he has been talking with defence officials.

Mr. Perry announced last week the United States intends to move between 3,000 and 4,000 troops stationed in northern Saudi Arabia for monitoring the "no-fly zone" over southern Iraq as a safeguard against more possible attacks by terrorists.

Military officials have

projected that moving the troops now based near Dhahran to more secure bases could cost hundreds of millions of dollars. The Saudis so far have made no firm commitment to help defray those costs.

Mr. Perry also had planned to travel to Kuwait and Bahrain, where he was to meet with commanders of the 20,000 U.S. troops deployed in the Gulf region.

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO
13:03.....Cartoon — The Mask
13:25.....Here's Lucy
13:55.....Olympic Games
19:00.....Le Journal
19:10.....Olympic Games
22:00.....News in English
22:15.....Olympic Games

PRAYER TIMES

04:14.....Fajr
05:43.....(Sunrise) Duha
12:42.....Dhuhr
16:23.....'Asr
19:41.....Maghreb
21:11.....'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swefieh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.
771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.
775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church
Tel. 652526

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 845457.
The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654952.
Church of Nazarene Tel.
675691.
The Evangelical Light Church
in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Relative warm weather conditions
will prevail with temperatures 3-4
degrees centigrade above average
and winds northwesterly moder-
ate to active. In Aqaba, skies will
be partly cloudy, winds northerly
moderate to active, and seas chop-
py.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman.....24/36
Aqaba.....28/40
Deserts.....23/40
Jordan Valley.....28/40

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 36, Aqaba 37 Humidity
readings: Amman 36 per cent,
Aqaba 45 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Mukhlis Mazharah.....820425
Dr. Wisam Hazyin.....748563
Dr. Munther Al Qatani.....779959
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyin.....620115
Firas pharmacy.....661912
Ferdous pharmacy.....778336
Al Asena pharmacy.....637055
Nairokh pharmacy.....623672
Al Salam pharmacy.....636730
Yacoub pharmacy.....644945
Shmeisani pharmacy.....637600
Najib pharmacy.....847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir.....276852
Al Quds pharmacy.....(—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Ziyad Jghaitum.....992991
Khalifeh pharmacy.....985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre.....637111
Civil Defence Department.....661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue
Centre.....630341
Civil Defence Emer-
gency.....199
Rescue Police.....192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade.....617101
Blood Bank.....775121
Highway Police.....843402
Traffic Police.....896390
Public Security Dept.....630321
Hotel Complaints.....605800
Police Complaints.....661176

Water & Sewage Complaints.....897467
Amman Municipality Complaints
.....787111
Telephone Information (directory
assistance).....121
Overseas Calls.....010230
Central Amman Telephone
Centre.....623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs.....661101
Jordan Television.....771111
Radio Jordan.....774111
Water Authority.....680100
J. Electricity Authority.....815615
Electric Power Co.....636381
RJ Flight Information.....08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre.....813813/32
Khalidi Maternity.....644281/6
Akhlel Maternity.....642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity.....642362
Malhas, J. Amman.....636140
Palestine, Shmeisani.....607071
Shmeisani Hospital.....669131
University Hospital.....777101/3
.....845845
Al-Muasher Hospital.....667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali.....666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali.....664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen.....777101/3
Al-Bashir.....775111/26
Army, Marka.....891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital.....602240/50
Amal Hospital.....674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and
Special Surgery.....865199

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital
10:10.....Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:20.....Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:30.....Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
16:05.....New York (RJ)
16:55.....Amsterdam, Brussels (RJ)
18:00.....Paris (RJ)
18:25.....Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:30.....London (RJ)
19:15.....Athens (RJ)
19:25.....Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
19:30.....Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
19:45.....Frankfurt (RJ)
20:30.....Tunis (RJ)
20:40.....Vienna (RJ)
21:15.....Rome (RJ)
01:10.....Cairo (RJ)

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT
This information is supplied by
Royal Jordanian (RJ) information
department at the Queen Alia
International Airport Tel.
(08)53200-5, where it should
always be verified. Information on
other flights can be supplied on
phone 08 (52700)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
09:15.....Dhahran (add) (RJ)
09:30.....Jeddah (RJ)
09:55.....Lamaca (RJ)
10:05.....Riyadh (RJ)

Other Flights
06:30.....Tel Aviv (LY)
12:30.....Doha (Q7)
13:40.....Bahrain (GF)
15:05.....Moscow (SU)
16:30.....Dubai (EK)
20:35.....Cairo (MS)
21:10.....Beirut (ME)
22:15.....London, Beirut (BA)
23:20.....Istanbul (TK)
23:30.....Athens (OA)
01:20.....Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)
02:30.....Belgrade (GU)

DEPARTURES

Royal Wings (RW) Flights
09:50.....Aqaba (RW)
19:45.....Tel Aviv (RW)
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
10:00 Amman (arriving at Marka
Airport from QAIA) (RW)
20:30.....Aqaba (RW)

HIAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman.....8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus.....5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus.....7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman.....5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jds per kg.

Apple.....	700/500
Banana.....	600/600
Banana (mulchamar).....	520/520
Banana (imported).....	800/600
Cabbage.....	370/280
Carrot.....	160/90
Cauliflower.....	240/150
Cucumber (large).....	180/100
Cucumber (small).....	320/180
Eggplant.....	210/140
Garlic.....	650/400
Grapes.....	480/350
Lemon.....	600/400
Marrow (large).....	250/150
Marrow (small).....	400/250
Mulukhiyah.....	130/80
Onion (dry).....	150/80
Okra.....	700/400
Orange.....	480/300
Pea.....	620/400
Peach.....	720/500
Peas.....	700/500
Pepper (hot).....	320/200
Pepper (sweet).....	300/200
Potato.....	320/220
String Bean.....	620/400
Sweet melon.....	210/140
Tomato.....	120/70
Water melon.....	110/70

Home

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Home News



40 dancers swirl in an outstanding performance by the Lebanese Caracale dance troupe of 'Elissa, Queen of Carthage' at the historic Roman city of Jerash July 27. Caracale is part of the two week cultural festival which includes over 200 activities by performers and artists from the Middle East, Europe and the Americas (Reuters photo)

Study suggests new laws to upgrade transport sector

AMMAN (Petra) — A team of Jordanian experts Saturday presented the Ministry of Transport with a study on ways to promote transport and trade in Jordan, and between Jordan and other Arab countries with a view towards drafting legislation that would prevent monopoly in the transport sector and guarantee free competition among transportation companies.

The study which was presented to Minister of Transport Nasser Lawzi at a meeting Saturday also recommended that the draft law include regulations on the use of roads, the establishment of a main terminal for trucks in Amman, and rules to guide transport operators within the country.

The study suggested that Jordan modernise its transportation sector in order to conform with modern European specifications and standards.

Also, it underlined the importance of clear instructions which should be given to transportation companies on the safe transportation of dangerous materials and perishable goods, as well as



Nasser Lawzi

other procedures for trucks specialising in the transportation of industrial materials.

In a statement, Mr. Lawzi said that the Ministry of Transport had retained the team to conduct the study in order to find ways to modernise the transportation system and facilitate the exchange of trade.

He added that the study was necessary because of the on-going political and economic developments in the Middle East region, and the impact of such changes on the transport sector citing as an example the Jordanian-Israeli transport

agreement as a major development in this area.

To maximise the benefits of transport and trade in this region, he said, Jordan has to take appropriate measures to rehabilitate and invigorate the transport sector, and has to modernise its fleet of vehicles, especially trucks.

Mr. Lawzi also stressed the importance of upgrading and modernising laws governing the transport sector, and introducing guidelines that will help promote transportation as well as ensure public safety.

Abdullah Jabour, director of the ministry's transportation department, said at the meeting that the study contained analysis of the road situation and transportation problems in Jordan, and presented the ministry with a set of recommendations in order to deal with them.

By improving the transport sector, he said, Jordan is certain to increase its benefit from trade exchanges and import-export operations within the Arab region and beyond.

Yemeni environment officials to study wildlife reserves in Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) will today open a five-day training seminar at the Dana Wildlife Reserve for a team of officials employed by the Yemeni Environment Protection Council.

The seminar participants will be lectured by a British expert on principles and procedures involved in the creation of wildlife reserves and how to select appropriate sites, according to RSCN Director Khaled Irani.

Mr. Irani said the team members will tour the five other reserves managed by the RSCN in the Kingdom, and thus, will get a first-hand look at the development and administration of several reserves.

He said the RSCN is currently holding another seminar for 15 people from the Palestine self-rule areas in addition to another Yemeni group currently attending a training workshop at the RSCN in Amman.

He said that the RSCN was ready to extend a helping hand to any other Arab country planning to create wildlife reserves in order to inspire the spread of plant life, save endangered animals, and help to protect the environment from pollution.

The RSCN operates wildlife reserves at Azraq, Shomari, Wadi Mujib, Zubiya, Rum and Dana through which the society hopes to protect indigenous species in their natural habitat, develop projects to preserve the fauna and flora of Jordan, reintroduce endangered and locally extinct species, and help to prevent environmental pollution among other objectives.

According to Mr. Irani, the Yemeni team which arrived in Amman Saturday will spend ten extra days in the Kingdom after taking part in the Dana seminar in order to visit other areas of interest.

'Scientific Day' calls for measures for environmental protection

AMMAN (Petra) — At "Scientific Day" organised by the Jordanian Society for Combating Desertification Saturday its participants suggested several measures to spread public awareness of the importance of protecting the environment, especially to trees which are vulnerable to climatic and environmental changes.

A statement drafted last week by the organisers of the event, in cooperation with the Civil Defence Department (CDD) and the Jordanian Contractors Association, called for joint efforts by the public and private sectors includ-

ing special chapters in school and university textbooks to educate students on the value of protecting trees.

They also suggested marking a national day to promote public concern for the problem of desertification and appealed to Parliament to enact laws to ensure forest protection.

The statement also asked Mosque preachers to exhort worshippers to take active steps in protecting the country's forests and called on the Ministry of Agriculture to work towards securing funds from international organisations to finance forest-

protection projects.

The statement also criticised the continual encroachment of construction projects on agricultural lands.

To solve this problem, it urged the ministry and other concerned departments to adopt the idea of creating "green belts" around Jordanian towns and suggested the idea of imposing a one-fils extra charge on each electricity bill to raise sufficient funds to green the badia regions and stem desertification.

Joint Jordanian-Israeli water panel proceeding in 'right direction'— official

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Rejecting local press reports claiming that questions still exist about some articles in Annex II of the peace treaty on "water related issues," Secretary General of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation Qusay Quteishat declared that the works of the joint committee in charge of identifying additional sources of water as provided for by the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty are "proceeding in the right direction."

Stressing that the works of the Jordanian-Israeli 6-member main steering committee and of all the subcommittees on water are still "on-going," Mr. Quteishat denied that the Israeli side is not being cooperative and, warning against easy criticisms and speculations, said that "the final solution to the water

problem can not be achieved overnight."

The report, published Thursday by Arabic daily Al Rai, claimed that Israel was guilty of the non-implementation of some articles in Annex II of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty calling on the two parties to cooperate in finding sources for the supply to Jordan of an additional quantity of 50 million cubic metres (mcm) a year of potable water.

Rejecting the report, according to which "the Israeli side in the water committee called on Jordan to look for sources within Jordanian boundaries to provide the additional 50 mcm per year of potable water in question," Mr. Quteishat stressed that "the joint committee has so far worked hard for the implementation of the treaty, within the limits of logistic impediments."

Though Mr. Quteishat

would not elaborate any further, he might have referred to the works of construction of the infrastructure for the full implementation of the agreement, such as dams, pipelines, and desalination plants, which are still under way.

Minister of Information Marwan Muasher was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday as telling high school students leaving Amman for a peace camp in the U.S. that "Jordan is still awaiting the implementation of Israel's commitment to pump water to Jordan despite the lapse of one and a half years from the signing of the peace treaty."

Apart from the additional 50 mcm per year of water "from additional sources to be identified and agreed upon within one year from the date of effectiveness of the treaty," the peace agreement also secured for Jordan a water share in both the Yarmouk and the Jordan rivers.

on the river and off-flood flows.

Though Annex II called on the joint water committee to develop "within one year from the entry into force of the treaty a plan for the supply to Jordan of the above mentioned additional water," 18 months have lapsed since the agreement was signed, in Oct. 1994, and the joint committee has not forwarded to the respective governments any plan.

Jordan's pre-treaty situation, with only about 975 mcm of water available in 1993, was far below the water-poverty-line, marked by the minimum per capita yearly consumption of 1,000 cubic metres.

When fully implemented, the peace treaty should allow Jordan to receive additional 215 mcm of water annually, with an increase of about 30 per cent in the country's renewable water resources before the tr

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Self-monitory ECG device enters Jordan market

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — With the launch of a new service which will allow cardiac patients to conduct their Electrocardiogram (ECG) on their own wherever they are and send it via telephone to a receiving station where doctors specialised in ECG interpretation will be available 24 hours a day, tele-medicine drops anchor in Jordan.

According to doctors at the Heartbeat Centre, this new service "will provide the psychological support that no cardiac patient can have enough of" and, knowing that they can rely on 24 hour medical care and supervision, the patients and their relatives will be relieved of a great amount of stress.

Using a small portable electronic device working on a 9-volt battery, the patient can send her/his cardiogram via telephone to the receiving station for telephonic transmitted ECG, just putting the device on the mouthpiece of the telephone.

Cardiovascular disease is the number one killer in Jordan, accounting for more deaths than all other medical causes combined.

Stressing the importance of the new system, which allows ECG reading during pain, and therefore increases the possibilities of an accurate diagnosis, General Manager of Heartbeat Khalil Zayaddin said that the service, first launched in 1994, has proven so far very successful the countries where it has been adopted.

According to Dr. Zayaddin the device could be useful to companies and tour agents, who are responsible for the welfare of large numbers of people of all ages.

Confronted with the argument that such a device is far out of the reach of the average Jordanian patient, Heartbeat said it is addressing government institutions to subsidise it to those in need.

Ministry considers regional division of Kingdom

IRBID (J.T.) — During a meeting in the northern city of Irbid Saturday, two ministers told senior officials of the area that while the government plans to equally distribute the number of governorates over the country's northern, central and southern regions, it was also looking at brining local municipalities under single roofs much in the same way that the Greater Amman Municipality is structured.

According to Minister of the Interior Awad Khleifat, regional division would allow for better integrated study on developing water, health, road network, and public services for the three major areas as well as help in fighting off desertification.

Dr. Khleifat urged officials to present to the government what they see as their urgent priorities so that these would be worked on soon.

"We hope through this plan to be able to give equal attention to each of the three regions in Jordan without favouring one over the other," he added.

Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs Abdul Razzak Tubeishat told the meeting that "the only means for developing the municipalities is by uniting them so thus putting them in a better position with more financial



Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs Abdul Razzak Tubeishat and Minister of Interior Awad Khleifat meet with senior officials in Irbid and discuss the government's plans to equally distribute the number of governorates in the country according to regional divisions (Petra photo)

resources to provide public services."

The new municipalities law has empowered the Council of Ministers to merge two or more neighbouring municipalities or village councils when deemed necessary in order to improve the quality of services to the local communities," added the minister.

He said the government will select a few municipalities as the first step in the unification process.

At Saturday's meeting which was held to review integrated projects for the governorates of Jerash, Irbid, Mafraq and Ajloun, attendees talked about protecting the environment, problems of poor sewerage systems, factory pollution, distribution of state-owned lands, laying more railways in the region and the build-

ing of an airport in northern Jordan.

Dr. Khleifat announced the formation of a committee comprised of the four governors of the region and representatives of Yarmouk University, Jordan University of Science and Technology and the AL al Bayt University to study development issues and using as an example the Greater Amman Municipality.

Muasher: Jerusalem capital of Palestine, Israel

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Information Marwan Muasher said on Saturday that "Jordan does not call for the partition of the city of Jerusalem but rather (for the Holy City) to serve as the capital for two states: Palestine and Israel."

In remarks to a group of 20 students from the Baccalaureate School preparing to participate in the "seeds of peace" camp in the state of Maine in the U.S. on Aug. 18, the minister said that "peace will not be just if no solution to the Jerusalem question was found because the city is considered sacred to all the monotheistic religions."

The 20 Jordanian students, aged 14-16, will be participating in the camp's activities with students from Egypt, Israel, Kuwait, Qatar, Morocco, Palestine and the U.S.

In reply to another question by the students the minister said "Jordan condemns all acts of terrorism which target civilians regardless of their nationality."

Asked why only a limited number of Jordanians visit Israel, the minister said that Jordanians awaited progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track. Also discouraging is "the time needed for obtaining a visa" to Israel, he said.

WHAT'S GOING ON

JERASH FESTIVAL

• Concert by Syrian artist Sabah Fakhri at the South Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
• Play entitled "Julia Douma" by Sharif Khazdar Troupe at Ardous Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
• Concert by Syrian artist Bashar Zargan at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:30 p.m.
• Performance by Kolkha Folk Group of Germany at the Sound and Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
• Concert by artist Haidam Amer at Gracia Theatre at 8:00 p.m.
• Play entitled "The Bull, O Master" at Gracia Theatre at 9:30 p.m.
• Egyptian National Circus and British Five-Star Circus at the Main Theatre at 6:30 p.m.
• Performances by the Jordanian Armed Forces Musical Band, the Jordanian Band of Popular Art, the Madaba Youth Centre, Nor Serant Armenian Folklore Troupe, and Jerash Youth Centre at the Main Theatre at 6:30 p.m.
• Poetry recitals by Egyptian, Iraqi, Lebanese, Jordanian, and Moroccan poets at Darat Al Fann, Jabal Weibdeh (6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.)

LECTURES

• "Roman Home" by Professor John Oleson at the American Centre of Oriental Research (ACOR) at 7:00 p.m. (Tel. 846-117).
• Lecture on works of Iraqi artists in the 1950s, including those by Fayeq Hassan, and Dr. Khalid Qasab at Orfal Art Gallery, Umm Utheina at 7:00 p.m. (Tel. 826932).

EXHIBITIONS

• Plastic art by Ayman Gharaibeh at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Aug. 1.
• "Dancers of Fines" — Works by Iraqi artists Ismail Sheikhy, Khalid Qasab, Suzanne Sheikhy, and Nur Behjet at Orfal Art Gallery, Umm Utheina (Tel. 826932), until Aug. 1.
• Exhibition of works by Sudanese artist Rashid Diab entitled "The Time of Silence" at Darat Al Fann, Jabal Weibdeh. Also displaying works by contemporary Arab artists, until July 31.



Angry supporters of ousted Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) leader Megawati Sukarnoputri set a fire in the street after riot police took over the party's headquarters Saturday. At least twenty people were injured and the headquarters badly damaged after being pelted with stones and molotov cocktails (Reuters photo)

Jakarta police raid on opposition headquarters ends in mass riots

JAKARTA (AFP) — A violent police raid on the headquarters of an opposition party led to widespread riots across Jakarta Saturday, with tens of thousands of taking to the streets, some setting fire to buses and buildings.

Hundreds of riot police and members of a breakaway faction of the opposition Indonesian Democracy Party (PDI) stormed the party's headquarters early in the day, leaving 87 injured by official counts.

Officers smashed down the front gate, set fire to banners, and forcibly removed supporters of ousted party leader Megawati Sukarnoputri, who had been holed up in the building for more than a month.

The government has recognised a breakaway faction of the party as the PDI's legitimate new leaders, but Megawati's faction — saying it was still the party's legitimate leadership — had defiantly continued to occupy the headquarters.

Megawati, the daughter of Indonesia's founding president, Sukarno, is widely regarded as one of the few people who could seriously challenge incumbent President Suharto, 75, in

1998 elections.

After authorities turned over the headquarters to the breakaway PDI faction, crowds of Megawati supporters, who chanted and cheered Megawati all afternoon, swelled to tens of thousands.

At 2.30 p.m. (0730 GMT) the Jakarta military Commander Lieutenant Colonel Jule Effendi ordered his troops to disperse the crowds, a PDI official said.

Witnesses said scores were injured in the ensuing charge after which authorities chased protesters down streets.

The charge sparked rioting by youths angered by the morning's raid.

At least six buildings were set alight in the Salemba area of central Jakarta, including a department of agriculture building, military dormitory and two car showrooms.

One group of youths drove a car from a Toyota showroom out onto the street, crashed it into a pole and set it alight, a witness said.

Thousands of youths ransacked the buildings and set fire to furniture and other office equipment, leaving debris and smoke billowing

onto the roads.

One onlooker said there were not enough military personnel in the area to control the youths, despite the despatch of 14 truckloads of troops as well as armoured personnel carriers that sprayed a liquid irritant onto the rioters.

Bank Swansarindo Internasional and Bank Maya Raga were also partially set ablaze and badly damaged by thrown rocks. Military personnel had earlier fled the area, which is close to the PDI headquarters.

"It's like a war zone," said one long-term resident.

At the height of the rioting, hundreds of people were chased by police into railway station near the PDI office. Others took shelter in mosques and the offices of the legal aid institute.

Three truckloads of special forces armed with automatic rifles — about 100 troops total — were sent as reinforcements to the most violent area late Saturday.

As night fell, all of central Jakarta was shut off to traffic, though police cars and police helicopters continued to patrol the area.

Thousands of military personnel have been deployed across the city of more than 10 million, especially in the centre and near the presidential palace.

Figures for the total number of injured were not immediately available.

An AFP photographer and an American diplomat were among those hurt in the afternoon police charge.

Ed McWilliams, a political attaché at the U.S. embassy, was hit when he tried to stop soldiers from beating a woman.

Megawati was ousted as PDI leader by the breakaway faction at a rebel party congress last month that was held with the backing of the government and the military.

Suryadi, has been recognised as the party's leader by Suharto.

However, Megawati's faction has launched a series of lawsuits in hopes that courts will declare its ouster illegal.

The PDI is one of only three legally recognised parties in Indonesia, so Megawati's removal from party leadership has been seen as a bid to shut her out of electoral politics.

Rebels, Russians resume contacts in Chechnya

GROZNY, Russia (R) — The warring sides in Chechnya held direct contacts on Saturday for the first time since an upsurge in fighting shattered a ceasefire agreed before Russia's presidential election.

Russian and Chechen rebel representatives met to discuss how to proceed with an exchange of prisoners under an agreement which has been in doubt since fighting worsened days after Russian President Boris Yeltsin won a second term on July 3.

Rebel representative Khasbek Makashev and Russian Colonel Alexander Pilipenko agreed in principle on the necessary steps for further prisoner exchanges, said Tim Guldinmann, the Swiss diplomat who helped mediate the pre-election deal.

"This is the first direct meeting which took place with regard to one area of the agreement," said Mr. Guldinmann, head of the mediating mission of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in the Chechen capital Grozny.

He hoped a meeting of rival military commanders

which he is trying to arrange would take place early next week.

Protesters tried for a second day running to march in Grozny in protest at the presence of Russian troops in Chechnya.

But police blocked off all entrances to the centre of Grozny, stopping people from gathering. The police had fired in the air to break up a crowd which gathered on Friday.

Mr. Yeltsin sent troops to the mountainous southern region in December 1994 to try to crush the separatists. The Russians are still trying to root out the last rebel fighters and more than 30,000 people have already been killed in the conflict.

Agreements reached in late May and early June, allowing for a troop withdrawal and disarmament of the rebels, have stalled. In the latest fighting, the Russians have launched air raids on villages where Moscow say rebels are still holding out.

The Russian troop presence is a sore point for all Chechens, whether or not they support the rebels.

Chechnya is dotted with Russian checkpoints. Soldiers sometimes fire

over the heads of civilians and have been accused of taking bribes and treating local people brutally.

A Russian armoured personnel carrier leading a military column ran over and killed a woman in central Grozny on Saturday.

A driver who saw the incident informed the Chechen police, who chased and stopped the column at the outskirts of town. The soldiers involved were handed over to military police.

The driver told Reuters cameraman Arbi Zubairaiyev that the column, comprising two armoured personnel carriers and a truck packed with soldiers, had been speeding through the crowded streets without regard for what was in its way.

The troops were to have been withdrawn by the beginning of September under the pre-election agreement but heavy fighting broke out a week after the election.

Since then, Russian helicopter gunships and artillery have pounded villages in the mountains to the south of the region and rebels have attacked Russian checkpoints.

1st homosexual Briton allowed to adopt child

LONDON (AFP) — A court in Scotland has for the first time granted permission for a homosexual man to adopt a child. The Times reported Saturday. The Edinburgh court of appeal overturned a ruling by a lower court which had declared the adoption of the child by a 34-year-old male nurse illegal. The court ruled that nothing in British law forbids the adoption of a child by a gay man or woman individually. However, when a couple apply jointly for adoption they are required to be married, the court indicated. The child, who is deaf and dumb and cannot get around without help, was put up for adoption in Scotland by social services in the northern city of Manchester when no-one could be found locally to adopt him. One of the appeal judges commented: "This severely handicapped child is fortunate to be in a home where he will be happy as well as responsibly looked after."

Bavarian trader weighs his clients on the scales of justice

BONN (AFP) — A Bavarian trader weary of seeing his proceeds eroded by light-fingered customers has taken to weighing clients as they enter and leave his store to prevent them walking off with the profits, according to Der Spiegel. Every customer is weighed as he or she enters the Heibo Bauspezi Garden Centre in Spiegelaue, southwest Germany, owned by Heinz Boxreiter. The customer is then given a magnetic card which has memorised the client's weight, according to a report in the news magazine to be published on Monday. On leaving, the client is weighed a second time. A custom-built computer system then makes a swift calculation on the basis of the products being paid for and if there is any discrepancy, a voice demands: "Do you still wish to place something on the conveyor belt?" A six-month trial period ended last week, with great success. According to Der Spiegel, only one theft was committed at Heibo Bauspezi and the culprit was swiftly detected.

TV presenter freed, rape and prostitution probe goes on

BIELLA, Italy (AFP) — A popular talk show host accused of rape and of luring girls on his show into prostitution was freed by a court Saturday as inquiries continue into the allegations. Valerio Merola was already under house arrest after being detained July 12 following an 18-month investigation into complaints filed by several girls. The star with a playboy reputation has insisted the women consented to sex, and produced video tapes and letters purporting to back up his claims. Another presenter, Gigi Sabani, is under house arrest for allegedly enticing girls into prostitution. Merola and Sabani host shows that generally feature young attractive females aged 13 to 20 walking about in bathing suits. A third presenter, Gianni Boncompagni, the best-known of the trio, has been informed he is also under investigation for similar accusations by magistrates in this northern town.

U.N. condemns shooting down of Cuban exiles' planes

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Security Council on Friday condemned the shooting down by Cuban MiGs last February of two unarmed light planes flown by Miami-based Cuban exiles.

The U.S.-sponsored resolution said this violated the principle that weapons must not be used against civil aircraft in flight. The vote was 13 in favour and none against, with abstentions by China and Russia.

The resolution was a follow-up to a report by the Montreal-based International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) which found the Cessna aircraft were destroyed by air-to-air missiles nine and 10 nautical miles, respectively, outside Cuban airspace and not inside, as Havana had claimed. The report also said the planes did not receive proper warning. The four crew were killed.

The aircraft belonged to the Miami-based organisation Brothers to the Rescue, which helps Cubans trying to reach the United States on boats and rafts and has sometimes violated Cuban airspace. The council resolution, which endorsed the conclusions of the ICAO report, "condemns the use of weapons against civil aircraft in flight as being incompatible with elementary considerations of humanity" and the rules of customary international law, and called on Cuba to join other states in complying.

Opposition march in Belarus capital draws up to 15,000 people

MINSK (AFP) — Up to 15,000 people chanting slogans against President Alexander Lukashenko marched through the Belarus capital Minsk Saturday in an independence day demonstration called by the opposition.

The march, which was authorised by the government, ended peacefully after a meeting outside the city's sports palace.

Police were out in force for the march, called to mark the sixth anniversary of the Belarus independence declaration.

No violent incidents were reported. The march was called by three major opposition movements — the Social Democratic Party, the Liberal Party and the Nationalist Popular Front.

Marchers shouted "down with Lukashism," "independence," and "president, traitor, resign," protesting at Lukashenko's authoritarian and pro-Russian policies.

There were also calls for political prisoners to be freed. The red-and-white flags of independent Belarus were prominent in the march, in

defiance of a decree by Lukashenko to restore the republic's Soviet-era flag.

Since winning election by a landslide in the summer of 1994, Lukashenko has sought to muzzle the opposition and restore close ties with Russia.

However, unlike Russia, the Republic has been slow to implement market reforms.

Popular front demonstrations in April and May against Lukashenko's rapprochement with Russia were broken up violently by security forces and there were numerous arrests of opposition activists and journalists.

At the political meeting which ended Saturday's demonstration Liberal Party leader Stanislaw Bogdankevich told the crowd: "Our people sometimes make mistakes and they elected someone who cannot guide them on the right path."

"I urge you to defend Belarus against dictatorship," he said.

Leonid Borshevsky, deputy leader of the Popular Front, said: "People are now uniting to resist the totalitarian regime."

Japan city struggling to combat secondary bacterial infection

TOKYO (AFP) — Doctors fighting Japan's worst post-war food poisoning outbreak were struggling to combat secondary infections as the illness, largely confined to children, was beginning to show up in adults, officials said Saturday.

Of 2,383 people recently tested for the potentially fatal colon bacteria, 92, or 3.9 per cent, showed evidence of infection, though not all of them were sick, said an official in Sakai, a suburb of the western city of Osaka.

Some of them were adults and doctors feared they could unknowingly spread the bacillus, known as O-157.

The test result indicates the danger that adults carry the O-157 without being aware of the infection... They can cause secondary infections," the city official said.

"Sakai city will continue calling on residents not to hesitate to have medical examinations, while handing out leaflets warning against the infection," he said.

The city has also closed down its four swimming pools, had school teachers

visit homes of their students personally to check any symptoms of illness, and offered financial assistance to get antibiotics and other medical treatments.

Train station operators in the area started sterilising stools and other toilet facilities in a bid to help prevent a further spread.

Forty-eight people were seriously ill with the infection in Sakai as of Saturday evening, down from 61 late Friday. Of these, 18 were listed as being critical, down from 25, officials said.

The total number of victims as of Saturday evening was 6,487 people, up 14 from a day earlier, with new cases found among families of initial victims. A total of 480 people are still in hospital.

Three people have died in the outbreak in the past two weeks.

A nationwide Sushi chain operator has boosted the alcohol content of its disinfectant liquid used at stores from 50 per cent to 76 per cent, while requiring chefs to wear plastic gloves, a store manager said.

Australia neutral in U.S.-Ghali campaign

SYDNEY (R) — Australia took a hands-off approach on Saturday to the U.S. campaign to replace Boutros Ghali as United Nations secretary general.

"Australia wouldn't play a very active role in this matter. We're not standing in the way of Boutros Ghali's candidacy," Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer told reporters.

He spoke at a news conference with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and the Australian and U.S.

defence ministers that concluded two days of talks in which both sides hailed their bilateral security relationship and stressed common views on most issues.

U.S. officials said Mr. Christopher had explained to the Australians why the Americans want to replace Dr. Ghali after a single four-year term.

The Clinton administration has argued a top-level change is needed so the U.N. can lead in the next century.

The Americans say only a new secretary general will be able to push through much-needed reforms that will give the U.N. more credibility, make its operation more efficient and stem flagging support for the world body in the United States.

The administration offered to support Dr. Ghali for another year, if he agreed to step down at that time.

But the secretary general, in a public challenge to the

U.N.'s most influential member, rejected the offer and announced plans to run for another full four-year term.

So far, few countries have publicly endorsed the U.S. position.

U.S. officials told Reuters they have had to persuade many countries — who believe the U.S. view might change after the November election — that the administration is serious about replacing Dr. Ghali when his term ends in December.

U.S. Senate clears foreign aid, more Korean funds

WASHINGTON (R) — The Senate on Friday voted to cut the U.S. foreign aid budget after agreeing to impose sanctions on Burma if political repression increases and approving more aid to help North Korea end its nuclear programme.

The Senate passed the \$12.2 billion foreign aid budget on a vote of 97-3, less than the \$12.4 billion spent last year and \$700 million below President Bill Clinton's request. The aid budget has fallen by 50 per cent since 1984.

Faced with threats that North Korea would back out of its agreement to freeze its nuclear weapons programme, the Senate doubled the U.S. purchase of heavy fuel oil for North Korea to \$25 million from \$12 million. The vote

was 73-27.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher had warned that Mr. Clinton might veto the entire foreign aid bill unless the full \$25 million for the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO) was approved.

Final approval of KEDO funding may be difficult to achieve given strong opposition in the House. Republican Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky told reporters. His subcommittee wrote the Senate's foreign aid bill.

Mr. McConnell, the driving force behind economic sanctions on Burma, said the Senate vote for a less stringent sanctions bill sought by the White House was "better than nothing." But he chided the administration for what he said was "absolutely no indi-

cation of interest in Burma."

The Senate plan would direct the president to force U.S. investors out of Burma if repression increases or if pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi is arrested, exiled or harmed. But he could waive sanctions if it were in the U.S. national security interest.

U.S. aid to Burma, which is zero now, would be banned unless it is for humanitarian purposes or if the Burmese regime starts cooperating in narcotics interdiction efforts.

Suu Kyi has urged international sanctions but Asian nations have responded that they would be counterproductive.

The European Parliament is on record in favour of economic sanctions and some companies including PepsiCo, Heineken, Amoco and

Carlsberg have pulled out of Burma.

Mr. McConnell told reporters he was determined to press for a mandatory ban on U.S. investment. "I assure you I am not going away until SLORC (Burma's ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council) goes away," he said. His next action could come later this year or on next year's foreign aid bill.

Mr. Christopher phoned Mr. McConnell from Asia urging him to back down on his strict sanctions. Mr. McConnell attributed the defeat of his plan to White House opposition and heavy lobbying by Unocal and Texaco, which have large investments in the area.

An aide to the senator said total U.S. investment in the country from 1989-1994 was \$213 million.

In the full \$12.2 billion foreign aid bill, Israel and Egypt are again the two largest recipients of U.S. aid with a total of \$5 billion in economic and military assistance. Money is also set out for the states of the former Soviet Union — \$640 million, of which \$225 million goes to Ukraine.

It bars aid to Mexico unless the government moves to prosecute drug kingpins. The 1996 level was \$35 million.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, who holds an influential position on the appropriations panel, called for a major review of U.S. foreign aid next year. He expressed concern that the decline in foreign aid would diminish U.S. influence in foreign affairs and give other countries, especially Japan, an opportunity to move into foreign markets.

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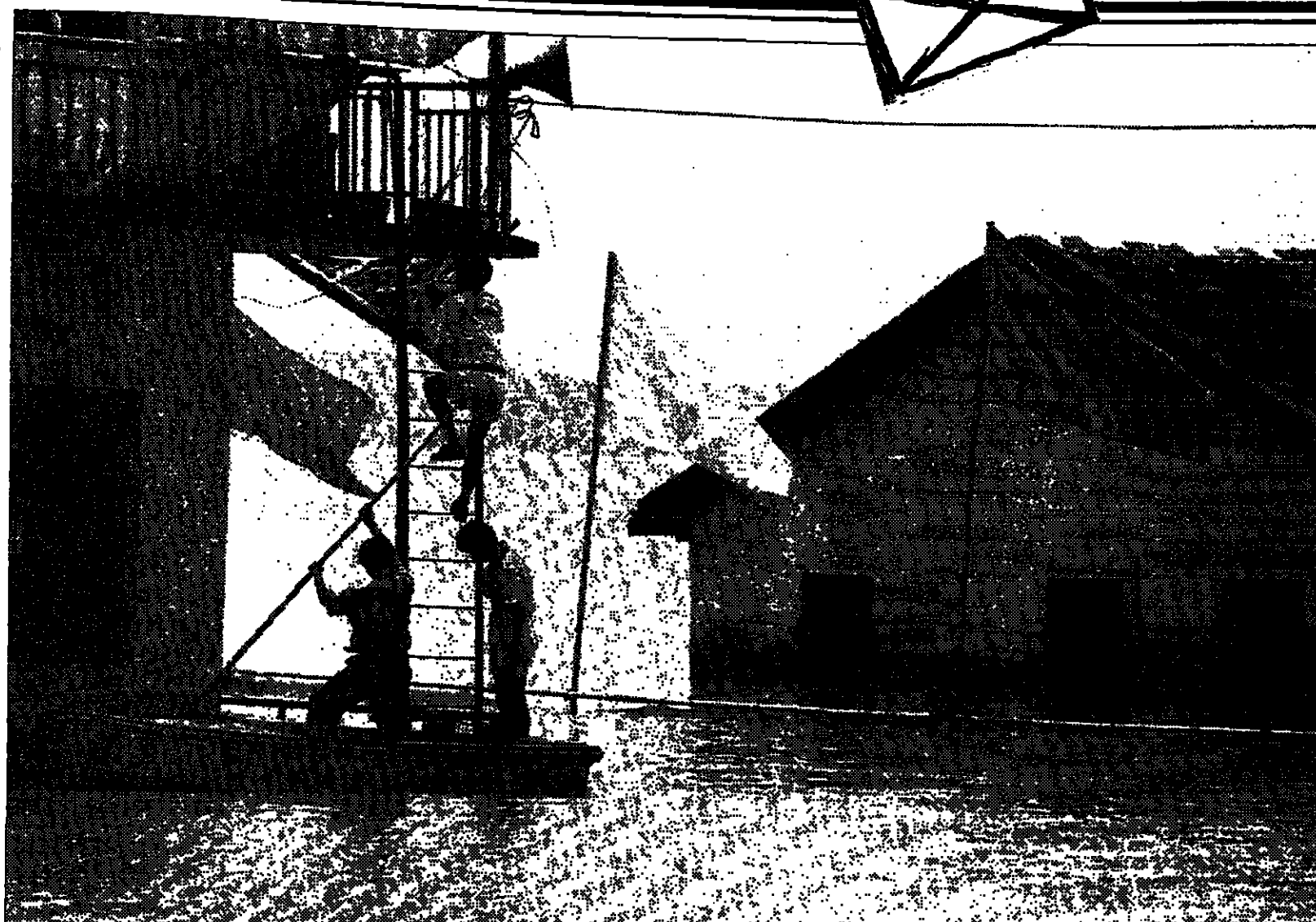
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Men visit a flooded sporting premises on the Yangtze River in downtown Wuhan in Hubei province, central China Saturday. The worst rainfall in 150 years has led to flooding causing over one thousand deaths and millions of dollars in crop losses. The Yangtze, Asia's longest river, has hit record levels and threatens to burst its banks if there is more rainfall (Reuters photo)

Toll rises to 1,600 as rains, floods pound China

WUHAN, China (R) — Fierce rains battering China have killed more than 100 people in southwestern Sichuan province, raising the death toll nationwide to more than 1,600 after weeks of devastating floods, officials said on Saturday.

In central Hubei province, hundreds of thousands of exhausted troops, police and volunteers lined dykes holding in the rain-swollen waters of the Yangtze near the provincial capital, Wuhan, on guard in case Asia's longest river bursts its banks.

Flood control officials in Chongqing in Sichuan province said torrential downpours this week had killed 31 people and left 27 missing, raising the death

toll from storms since mid-June to more than 100.

"There is no expansion of the disaster area and the floods are receding," one official said by telephone.

The new report of deaths raised the toll from devastating floods in recent weeks across vast swathes of central and southern China to more than 1,600.

An official in southeastern Fujian province said Typhoon Gloria, which hit the coast early on Saturday after tearing across the Philippines and southern Taiwan, was unlikely to cause significant damage or heavy rains because the storm was weakening gradually.

"We are now carrying out safeguarding work such as protecting unsafe houses

and barring windows," he said.

Officials have warned of further deaths and damage if more flooding occurs and as the annual typhoon season begins.

Estimates of damage throughout China have soared to 94.1 billion yuan (\$11.3 billion) in the nine hardest-hit southern and central provinces of Anhui, Guizhou, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu, Guangxi, and Sichuan.

With flood waters receding in many areas, officials said their chief task now was to clean up the debris and to disinfect while preventing outbreaks of epidemic diseases.

About 4.5 million people stranded by flood waters in

central Hunan province were extremely short of food and very hungry, prompting emergency deliveries of tonnes of biscuits, rice and mineral water by boat to victims, one local official said.

"Some people are close to starving," he said. "The most important operation now is to provide flood victims with tents, food and medicines."

Many villagers shrugged off the disaster, an almost annual event in China for centuries.

"What can we do? You can't fight natural disasters," said farmer Liu Shihuan, 48, in Hubei's Qianjiang county, about 140 kilometres west of Wuhan.

Mr. Liu said floods this

year had destroyed 100,000 yuan (\$12,000) worth of cotton, sesame and water melons, even though the whole village turned out to build up dykes along the Yangtze with sandbags to try to prevent it flooding.

With more flood peaks roaring towards Wuhan from the rain-battered upper reaches of the Yangtze, officials said they may have to divert waters in six places upstream but declined to say where embankments would be breached in an emergency.

China's Red Cross Society has appealed for 4.4 million Swiss francs (\$3.64 million) in emergency aid and Beijing has allocated more than 900 million yuan (\$108 million) of aid.

Tough talks for overthrown Hutu leaders to quit Burundi

BUJUMBURA (AFP) — Foreign diplomats and Burundi's new leaders Saturday began tough talks to allow Hutu leaders, who were deposed in a coup — including the former president — to leave Burundi, diplomatic sources said.

"For the moment, nothing has been done. None of the deposed leaders have left the country," the sources said.

But they said "difficult negotiations" were taking place between foreign embassies and the new authorities who seized power in an army-backed coup Thursday during which Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi, ousted President Sylvestre Ntibunganya.

Ntibunganya has been holed up in the U.S. embassy in the Burundi capital since Tuesday, where he sought shelter after being attacked by stone-throwing crowds at a funeral for 340 Tutsis, victims of ethnic massacres.

A U.S. official Saturday confirmed that Ntibunganya was still in the embassy building.

Earlier Saturday, a U.S. delegation set off from the embassy to meet with army chief of staff, an AFP correspondent in Bujumbura said.

Leonice Ngendakumana, speaker of the national assembly dissolved by

Thursday's coup, has taken refuge in the German embassy, while other Hutu members of the deposed government and officials from Ntibunganya's front for democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU) were also sheltering in foreign embassies or expatriate homes.

Burundi's new authorities, which have not yet been recognised by the international community, began restoring a certain level of normality on Saturday, and Bujumbura airport, closed since Thursday, was reopened.

In the capital, some 3,000 people demonstrated peacefully Saturday in favour of the new regime.

However, former Rwandan Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu, a Hutu, condemned the coup and accused Buyoya of being the "catalyst of the catastrophe" in Burundi.

In a statement sent to AFP in Nairobi, Twagiramungu, who lives in exile in Brussels, called on the international community to "condemn more forcefully the coup leaders from the Burundian army."

He further called on international leaders to deploy an intervention force in Burundi and to impose political and economic sanctions, which he said were "the only suitable ways of enabling a

return to legality."

Former Tutsi President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, who was deposed by Buyoya following a coup in 1987, also vehemently condemned last week's putsch.

In Kampala, the diplomatic effort to deal with the Burundian crisis got under way as Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa and his Ugandan counterpart Yoweri Museveni met, and were expected to be joined by African mediator on Burundi, former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere.

U.S. special envoy for Burundi Howard Wolpe was also expected to travel to Kampala on Saturday before possibly heading for Bujumbura.

Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim on Saturday said he wanted to do everything possible "to avoid a further bloodbath" in Burundi, but he did not specify how.

The OAU swiftly condemned the coup leaders, in contrast with western countries, which, despite initial outrage, have largely contented themselves with deploring the interruption of the democratic process in Burundi — a process initiated by Buyoya during his last term in office.

Iliescu announces presidency bid

BUCHAREST (R) — Romania's President Ion Iliescu, in power since the 1989 fall of communism, declared on Friday he would seek a fresh term of office in November polls under the banner of his country's unpopular ruling party.

"I present my candidacy with a feeling of responsibility for what we have begun together," Iliescu told enthusiastic members of the Leftist Party of Social Democracy.

"Our major goal is to modernise Romania, and to relaunch the national economy," he said.

Romania's living standards, lower now than before the revolution, must be brought to equal those of the rest of Europe, he added.

Mr. Iliescu, 66, had held off announcing his candidacy to put pressure on his leftist party to reform itself after damaging media and opposition accusations of corruption.

"There have been some members (of the ruling PDSR) who did not resist temptation," said Iliescu. "To be a PDSR member means to be modest and close to the people."

Mr. Iliescu, who had a 36-year-long career in the upper ranks of the Communist Party before the bloody downfall of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, is more popular than his party and is favourite to retain power in the ballot.

In the 1992 elections his candidacy dragged up the vote for the PDSR, a phenomenon party managers hope will be repeated.

PDSR managers expressed relief that Iliescu, whom they regard as their trump card, had finally pitched into the fight.

Opposition leaders condemned Mr. Iliescu's candidacy saying it broke constitutional rules limiting presidents to two terms.

Mr. Iliescu won ballots in 1990 and 1992, but the PDSR argues that only the second election was held under the terms of the post-communist constitution, devised in 1991. On Friday it carefully referred to Iliescu as bidding for a second mandate.

The opposition say the PDSR's arguments signal the party, in power since the revolution and associated by many with the communists, will fight ruthlessly to retain its privileges.

Mr. Iliescu's main rivals, Emil Constantinescu and Petre Roman, both centrist politicians committed to quicker economic reform, say they will make presidential failure to tackle abuse of power by the PDSR a central issue of the campaign. Analysts say Mr. Iliescu, who has been moving towards the political centre, will use the campaign to portray himself as a moderate who can safeguard Romanians against the cost of the country's transition to a free market.

Landslides in S. Korea kill seven, bury 60

SEOUL (R) — Separate landslides triggered by torrential rain have killed seven South Korean servicemen and buried up to 60 others near the tense Korean border, the military and air force said.

A military spokesman said landslides swept over an army barracks in the frontier area of Chollwon in mountainous northern Kangwon province, killing five soldiers and burying up to 60 others.

"At present we believe about 60 are buried. But it is difficult to say exactly how many. We have five deaths so far," the spokesman said by telephone.

"Army rescue teams were at the site immediately after, but bad weather from yesterday is making rescue work difficult right now," the spokesman added.

Efforts to rescue the soldiers were being hampered by bad weather. The toll was likely to rise as rescuers were unable to bring heavy equipment or helicopters into the area, he said.

South Korea's army chief of staff Yoon Yong-nam ordered all battalion commanders and senior officers, currently on leave or vacation, to report for duty.

Earlier on Saturday, South Korea's air force said two of its servicemen were killed and one was missing after a separate landslide, also in Chollwon.

It said in a statement that 15 servicemen were in an electric generating room to prepare for possible flooding when torrential rain triggered the landslide.

"Twelve of them were rescued immediately and are receiving treatment right now. Of them all, about three of them are in serious condition," an air force official said.

On Friday, another landslide killed 20 sleeping soldiers in Chollwon. About 20 other troops in their barracks escaped unhurt before rocks and chunks of earth engulfed the structure.

Top Burma general says country self-reliant

Rangoon (R) — Burma's army commander, in a reference to looming threats of sanctions, said the country has long been self-reliant and national strength came from within.

General Maung Aye, in a speech published in official newspapers on Saturday, said the Burmese people opposed "destructive forces" who were trying to engineer the imposition of sanctions against the country.

"The strength of the nation lies within," Maung Aye told army recruits in the speech on Friday. "The nation has been self-reliant without depending on external assistance with strings attached."

The U.S. Senate voted Thursday to allow President Bill Clinton to impose economic sanctions on Burma if Rangoon's military rulers increased pressure on opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other democracy leaders.

Under the proposal approved by the senate investment would be barred if repression increased or if Ms. Suu Kyi was harmed, arrested or exiled.

There have also been calls for sanctions on Burma in Europe with Denmark the driving force following the death in prison on June 2 of James Leander Nichols, its honorary consul.

Maung Aye, who is also a leading member of the ruling military body, the state law and order restoration council (SLORC), said "destructive forces" were trying to create the conditions for economic sanctions to further their aim of "grabbing power."

"Destructive forces" a term the military government uses to refer to democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and her National

League for Democracy (NLD) colleagues.

"Under the pretext of democracy and human rights they are creating conditions to cause economic sanctions to be imposed on the country and to hinder the visits of tourists and inflows of investment," the general said.

Ms. Suu Kyi has called for sanctions to pressure the government to open talks with the opposition on political reform.

She has frequently appealed to foreign businessmen to postpone investing in the country, and for tourists not to visit, until democracy is restored.

Burma's Asian neighbours, among them some of its largest foreign investors and leading trading partners, reject the calls for sanctions saying they would be counterproductive and would be a set back for the chances of reform.

Meanwhile, a commentary in a Burmese-language newspaper on Saturday called for legal action to be taken against Suu Kyi and her colleagues for their "false accusations damaging the dignity of the country."

Ms. Suu Kyi's regular weekend talks to crowds outside her home were illegal and action should be taken against her under emergency laws, the commentary said.

"It is time you stopped," it said.

Ms. Suu Kyi, the 1991 Nobel peace prize winner, was released from six years house arrest a year ago.

Tension between her and the government intensified in May after the SLORC detained more than 250 NLD members in an attempt to block a party meeting.

Floods kill 291 in Bangladesh, India

DHAKA (R) — A storm in the Bay of Bengal sank 18 fishing trawlers, killing at least 16 people and leaving 100 missing, a fishing community spokesman said Saturday.

The storm and monsoon floods battering India and Bangladesh, together with disease blamed on the deluge, have now killed at least 291 people in a fortnight and made millions homeless.

At least 17 died in northern Bangladesh of diarrhoea after drinking floodwater or eating contaminated food, local officials said.

They said more than 7,000 people in seven districts were suffering from diarrhoea.

A journalist in the district of Dinajpur told Reuters hundreds of people were falling sick every day.

The floods so far have claimed 193 lives in India's west Bengal, Assam and Bihar states, officials said,

with some two million left homeless in the three states.

Local officials in 37 flood-hit districts across Bangladesh estimated at least 65 people had been killed and 30 million affected. But flood monitors in the capital Dhaka confirmed only 23 deaths.

Floods inundated more areas in Dhaka city on Saturday, forcing hundreds of families to abandon their homes.

Some people moved on to the roofs of their half-submerged houses while others frantically sought shelter elsewhere, eyewitnesses said.

City officials have opened several flood shelters and kept volunteers on standby.

Weather officials said floods in Dhaka were likely to spread with more rain expected over the next few days.

Heavy rain continued to batter Bangladesh's com-

mercial capital of Chittagong on Saturday, forcing many people to stay at home.

However, the overall flood situation in northern Bangladesh had improved significantly since Thursday and most people had left temporary shelters, officials said.

But many had been forced to drink polluted water and eat rotten food, they told reporters.

More than 1,200 medical teams, mostly deployed in the past 24 hours, were working round the clock trying to contain fast-spreading disease.

Relief officials said emergency supplies had been distributed in all the country's affected districts but they were still inadequate.

Bangladeshi officials said 58,800 hectares (147,000 acres) of rice crops had been destroyed by the floods.

Sri Lankan troops wrest Tiger town but quit garrison; 160 dead

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lankan troops Saturday seized a key northern town from Tamil Tiger guerrillas after fierce fighting left 60 combatants dead, but gave up a strategic garrison after reportedly losing 100 men.

Hundreds of soldiers backed by tanks, artillery and air cover rapidly advanced 10 kilometres into territory held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and wrested Paranthan town, officials said.

But the town was abandoned when soldiers stormed it after smashing bunkers and trenches manned mostly by LTTE women fighters, who retreated further south, defence officials said.

"The Tigers had an earth-filled bund and trenches run-

ning for 400 metres on either side of the main approach road," an official said. "Tanks did a flanking move and thereafter the infantry mopped up the Tigers in bunkers."

He said most Tiger fighters manning bunkers were women, known as "freedom birds." The military estimated that 42 rebels were killed and about 100 wounded in fierce fighting since early Friday.

Military casualties included 17 killed, including an officer leading the frontline troops in the offensive launched Friday from the garrison of Elephant Pass, located at the entrance to the northern peninsula of Jaffna.

The Tigers admitted to only two dead among their ranks.

"There was heavy resistance initially, but now it is reduced

to sporadic mortar bomb attacks and sniper fire," a military official said, adding that air force planes continued to bomb behind rebel lines.

But the LTTE said it killed more than 100 soldiers and wounded many more when the Sri Lankan military "made a clumsy and disorganised withdrawal" Friday from a garrison at Mullaitivu in the island's northeast.

"The army reinforcements withdrew in total disarray leaving the dead and heavy weapons behind them," a LTTE statement from London said. "The LTTE opened heavy fire on the fleeing soldiers and inflicted heavy casualties."

A military spokesman admitted here that army reinforcements sent to rescue the

1,300-garrison overrun by Tamil guerrillas after a pre-dawn assault July 18 pulled back late Friday after finding no sign of life.

Elite commandos from the special force unit withdrew in order, suffering only one dead in mortar attacks by the Tigers, the spokesman said. Forty troops were wounded.

Sri Lankan opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe said Friday that the Tigers slaughtered more than 1,000 army troops after overwhelming the strategic Mullaitivu camp, delivering the worst military rout for Sri Lanka.

The government has so far admitted to only around 300 deaths, but military sources said a decision had been taken to admit the heavy losses. Sri Lankan media, operating

under censorship laws, have not reported the LTTE claims.

The LTTE said the government launched the offensive in Kilinochchi "as a face saving exercise following the humiliating military debacle at Mullaitivu."

The LTTE set up its new political headquarters at Kilinochchi after the military drove out the separatists from their stronghold of Jaffna peninsula in the extreme north in April-May this year.

Kilinochchi is located some 60 kilometres west of Mullaitivu.

Tamil sources in the northern town of Vavuniya said half-a-dozen international aid agencies, including the UN commissioner for human rights, had moved out of Kilinochchi to safer places.

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One way to democracy

ONE OF the main commitments that the government of Abdul Karim Kabariti made when it took office in February was to "raise the ceilings of public freedoms in the country." All political parties, especially the opposition, welcomed that pledge which was included in the government's policy statement to the Lower House. Parliament subsequently gave Mr. Kabariti and his team a convincing vote of confidence.

In its first three months in office the government lived up to its commitment, reducing considerably the political tension that had marked relations between the previous government and both the Lower House and the press. Later on, however, the picture changed somewhat dramatically. On the pages of our newspapers, particularly the party weeklies and tabloids, Jordanians often see reports about political activists being arrested, even "tortured," and about editors being detained and put on trial.

The atmosphere suddenly became so clouded that the opposition started warning of moves to submit no-confidence motions against the government. Enter the political pundits, who have raised all sorts of questions over what might have happened. The electioneering season has already begun, say some, and the deputies are positioning themselves for re-election in 1997. They have to take on the government. The Islamists, on the other hand, have been witnessing a battle between the doves and the hawks, with the latter group apparently winning the upper hand, other analysts think.

To be fair, though, there were other factors that may have been responsible for the shift in government attitudes towards the opposition, particularly the Islamists. Paramount among them was the claim made in March by the Palestine Liberation Organisation that Jordan was abetting Hamas activists. A campaign of arrests among Hamas apparatchiks and sympathisers ensued, leading to charges, mainly by the Islamic Action Front, that those detained were tortured. The government, however, tried to justify the arrests on the grounds that those arrested were endangering the country's security.

But while these claims and counter-claims are better left for the government, Parliament and human rights organisations to sort out, since verification is beyond the reach of journalists, certainly in this country, we think it is important for the press at least to raise the question of why an arrest campaign is being waged against editors, albeit only of tabloid newspapers. This campaign is in stark contradiction with the continued pledges by the government, particularly Minister of Information Marwan Muasher, to review and amend all laws pertaining to the media with a view to raising the ceilings of both press freedom and responsibility. In fact, Parliament has begun procedures to debate a new law for the Jordanian Press Association (JPA) which defines a framework for journalistic ethics and practices.

We expect Parliament to easily approve, if not actually stiffen, the articles concerning ethics since the speaker of the Lower House and many deputies have already moved against the press under the pretext that certain writings were endangering national unity and offending traditional values, whatever these may be. But why have the authorities decided to take action against those whom it perceives as violators of the law before the JPA bill is officially debated by Parliament?

It is unacceptable that journalists should be apprehended, put behind bars and refused bail before the court hears their cases. The government contends that the law allows for that. This is true. But that law in particular need not be used, especially by authorities whose judgement is often contradicted by the courts. People, especially journalists and writers, should not, cannot, live with the fear of ending up in jail every time they write a report or venture an opinion and even before the beginning of the legal process that proves or disproves alleged violations. So far, the courts have not sent a single journalist to jail. Why should the prosecutors general do? The government might contend that it is not responsible for the decisions of the prosecutors who answer to the judiciary council whose independence the Executive Authority insists it respects. That could be true in purely legal terms. But reality and experience carry sometimes their truths. The general political atmosphere in the country does influence all those living in it. The tough talk by the government and Parliament against the press does filter down to other layers of the officialdom, and tension leaves its mark on all aspects of public life — and those involved in it.

Excesses by the press — and we do admit that they exist — can be countered by activating and enforcing the law. Applying the law on its own, however, cannot solve the problem of tabloids, which we have created, allowed to operate and proliferate, legally and according to the law. Democracy is about respecting the free choice of citizens: the government, the press and the public have to go through one education process after another if we truly want it to survive and prosper. It is a long and often painful process but one that is nevertheless worth pursuing.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Restructuring is needed to face competition

THE POPULATION of Jordan is estimated at 4.3 million. The natural growth rate is 3.2 per cent. However, due to migration, the population in Jordan has been increasing at 4.7 per cent a year during the past 10 years.

Unemployment is currently estimated at 13 to 15 per cent. This is a relatively high rate, which is, so far, tolerated by the Jordanian society, thanks to the extended-family system, as most of the unemployed live in families with working members.

The volume of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1996 is projected to reach \$7.1 billion in current prices, a per capita GDP of \$1,650. This is lower than the per capita GDP of 15 years ago, even in nominal terms. The 1991 figure was due to the economic crisis of 1988/1989, and the extremely high growth rate of population. Per capita GDP has started to improve since 1992 as economic growth accelerated, but we are still far from restoring the level achieved in the early eighties.

The 1996 budget of the central government is in the order of \$2.5 billion, which is equal to 36 per cent of the GDP. This is obviously a very high ratio, suggesting that the government in Jordan is too big and should be downsized.

Over the years, the Jordanian budget suffered from chronic deficit. Deficit, before external grants, was as high as 17 per cent of the GDP when Jordan adopted a new economic adjustment programme. It is projected to be as low as 4.1 per cent this year. The budget deficit is supposed to become nil with the conclusion of the programme in 1998, when Jordan can be considered financially self sufficient for the first time in its history.

Foreign exchange reserves of the banking system, net of foreign liabilities, is currently in the order of \$2.5 billion, of which the official net reserve of the Central Bank are just above half-a-billion dollar. The programme calls for doubling the reserve in two years.

Jordan's foreign indebtedness declined from a peak of \$8.5 billion in 1989 to around \$6.4 billion in 1996. At one time, debt amounted to 200 per cent of the GDP. It stands at less than 100 per cent now. Reduction of debt is due to repayments, buy-back operations at large discounts. American write off of debts and the growth of GDP over the past six years.

It is planned to bring down the debt ratio to 75 per cent of GDP, to make Jordan more attractive to foreign investors, and to exclude the possibility of a foreign

exchange shortage, like in 1988.

The main objectives of Jordan's economic adjustment programme are: reduction of budget deficit and balance of payments, stabilisation of the dinar's exchange rate, liberalisation of economy and removing hurdles and distortions, privatisation, higher economic growth, containing inflation and rebuilding the Central Bank's foreign exchange reserves.

Jordan overhauled most of its economic policies, adopted free trade policy, reduced customs tax to an average of 16 per cent, with a ceiling of 30 to 50 per cent, except for alcohol, cars and cigarettes. Jordan abandoned the imports substitution policy in favour of a policy of growth through exports and opening up to the global market.

It is in this setting that Jordan decided to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to reach out to the world market, and decided to join the European partnership to connect with the European huge market.

To get quality and be ready for the expected competition, there is need for restructuring to enable various productive sectors to survive and face competition in both the domestic and foreign markets. This is a new challenge facing the private sector.

Amnesty International finds Cana attack intentional and unjustified

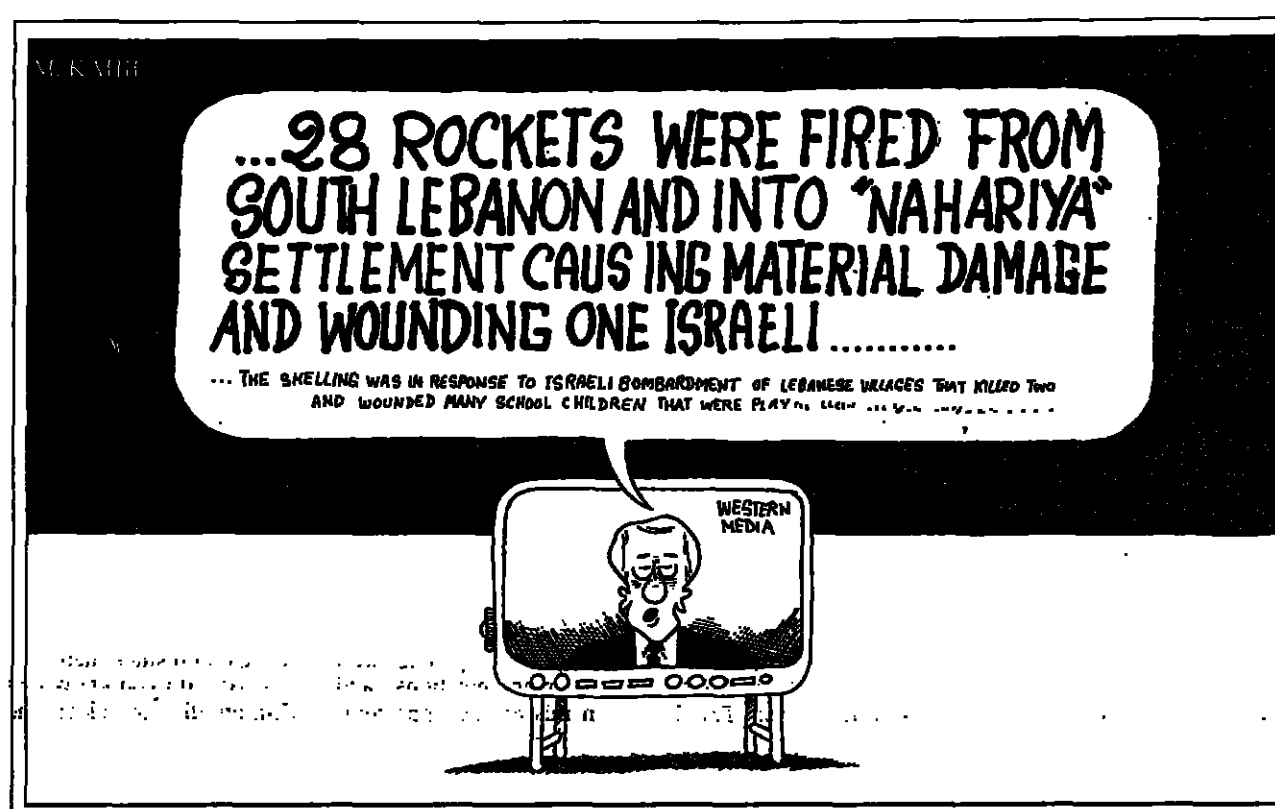
By Michael Jansen

IN ITS report on "Unlawful killings during operation 'Grapes of Wrath'," released Wednesday, Amnesty International took a far firmer line on Israel's bombardment of the U.N. compound in the south Lebanese village of Cana in which more than 100 Lebanese civilians died than the U.N. investigators did.

The U.N. did not accept the Israeli contention that the artillery bombardment of the Fijian U.N. peacekeepers headquarters on April 18 was a "mistake" or the result of a technical failure, implying that the targeting was "intentional." Amnesty International said that "the IDF (the Israeli army) intentionally attacked the U.N. compound, although the motives for doing so remain unclear."

This was a brave stand in the face of American and Israeli pressure to conceal the truth about the Cana massacre and encourage the world to once again forget Israel's crimes against humanity.

Israel's justified the attack on the Fijian compound by claiming that Israeli gunners were responding to a mortar attack by a Hizbollah team, positioned just 200 metres from the U.N. compound, against an Israeli army sabotage unit which had infiltrated the U.N. buffer zone in order to lay mines. Israel claims that artillery batteries made two mistakes in identifying the coordinates of the U.N. base but Amnesty International found that the "dispersion pattern" of the shells showed that the 19 shells which landed in or around the base were in a "separate barrage" from those launched at the mortar position. Furthermore, the Israelis employed 50 per cent more "proximity" fused shells (which burst above ground sending shrapnel downwards as a



means of killing large numbers of personnel) when targeting the U.N. base than when targeting the mortar position in which 5 per cent "proximity shells" were used. Israel's aim was, therefore, to cause as many casualties as possible in the U.N. compound, whether among Fijian troops or civilians sheltering there.

Amnesty International does not accept Israel's contention that it did not know civilians were in the base. The organisation refers to the fact that the U.N. peacekeepers had informed Israel that 6-7,000 civilians were sheltering in U.N. compounds throughout the U.N. area of operations.

Amnesty International points out that "there were 270 occasions during the operation when UNIFIL position (including convoys and vehicles) came under 'close fire' by Israeli artillery and aircraft and mentions 15 occasions when they came under

"close fire" by Hizbollah. Specifically, Amnesty International mentions that a Nepalese UNIFIL position in the village of Majdal Zun came under Israeli artillery attack the day before the Cana incident. "Eight shells landed directly inside the compound... causing extensive damage" but not injuries because both the troops stationed there and the civilians in the base were in shelters.

The human rights group takes up two other flagrant Israeli attacks on civilian targets which made operation "Grapes of Wrath" infamous: the helicopter rocketing of an ambulance on April 13, in which two women and four little girls were killed, and the assault by warplanes against a house in upper Nabatieh on April 18, in which nine civilians died.

Amnesty International, relying on information supplied by UNIFIL and special investigators sent to

South Lebanon, also contradicts Israeli claims that Hizbollah habitually fired from nearby (200 metres) U.N. bases and positions. And in the 19 incidents cited by the Israeli army as proof of this claim, Amnesty International found that "Hizbollah fire was usually from considerably further away than the IDF alleged, in some cases as far away as one kilometre (not 200 metres) from the nearest UNIFIL post."

Amnesty International condemned the Israeli army inquiry into the Cana massacre as "wholly inadequate" and recommended that Israel initiate a "full public report" and bring to justice those responsible.

Israel will not, however, follow Amnesty International's advice because, for the Israeli army and public, Arab lives are of little or no consequence. The gunners responsible for the slaughter of the innocent people in Cana were totally

unrepentant in interviews with the Israeli press, calling the civilians they massacred "Arabushim," a Hebrew epithet for "low Arabs."

Racism is rampant in Israel as this case shows. This fact was demonstrated once again this week when a former Israeli security agent, Ehud Yatom, frankly admitted to the daily Yediot Ahranot that he had murdered two Palestinian youths who hijacked an Israeli bus in 1984. "I am proud of what I did," Yatom told the newspaper. He had crushed the skulls of the Palestinians with rocks, on the direct orders of the then head of Shin Bet, Avraham Shalom, after the youths had been severely beaten by the paratroops unit which stormed the bus. This unit was commanded by Yitzhak Mordechai, who personally participated in the beatings. Although a government inquiry found Mordechai guilty of causing grievous

bodily harm to the hijackers, he was later acquitted by a military court. The Shin Bet chief and three other officials implicated in the murder of the prisoners were pardoned by the then President Haim Herzog.

This sorry tale is important not only because, once again, it demonstrates Israeli defiance of all civilised norms in dealing with those considered as its "enemies" but also because Mordechai, a man capable of nearly beating unarmed men to death, is now Israel's minister of defence. Following the 1984 incident, he rose to the rank of full general and headed all three geographical commands, southern, central and northern, of the "IDF".

Palestinian "infidels" and resisters and Hizbollah fighters can expect little quarter from this headline general who is prepared to kill with his own hands as well as to order the targeting of civilians from a distance via airstrikes and artillery barrages.

Amnesty International's recommendations to Israel will fall on deaf ears also because Israel, throughout its history, has never been made to account for its civilian massacres and gratuitous killing of individuals. The committee charged with monitoring the ceasefire "understanding" for southern Lebanon, at present setting up its headquarters in Nicosia, may be in a position to curb Israeli excesses because three of the five members of this grouping — France, Lebanon and Syria — will certainly combine to oppose and publicly criticise Israeli attacks against civilians in violation of the "understanding" — which the other two members of this committee — Israel and the U.S. — will attempt to justify and minimise, as they tried to do over the Cana massacre.

Call for strong-man rule stirs Bulgarian passions

By Gareth Jones

SOFIA — Bulgaria's President Zhelyu Zhelev has stirred up a hornet's nest by calling for a powerful Russian-style presidency to restore order and spearhead long-delayed reforms in the troubled Balkan country.

In a rare show of unity, politicians from across the spectrum condemned Mr. Zhelev's remarks as irresponsible and said they showed he was bent on staying in power despite his defeat in a recent U.S.-style primary election.

The ruling Socialist Party (BSP), often the target of Mr. Zhelev's scorn for its alleged failure to push market reforms, accused him of waging a "war of the institutions".

However diplomats and analysts said Mr. Zhelev's comments pinpointed a wider sense of frustration with Bulgaria's lack of economic and political

progress in the six years since the fall of its Communist government.

Under its post-Communist constitution Bulgaria is a parliamentary republic in which the president, though popularly elected, is a largely ceremonial figure with limited powers.

"The present constitution and construction of the state simply does not work or works badly," Mr. Zhelev said.

Russia had pulled far ahead of Bulgaria with its reforms precisely because President Boris Yeltsin has sweeping powers, said Mr. Zhelev, a feisty former dissident philosopher.

Mr. Zhelev's attack on the parliamentary system coincides with an acute economic crisis triggered by the slow pace of reforms.

"People are fed up, they want change and they want order too. Zhelev is trying to offer both with his call for a strong presidency," said one Sofia-based western diplomat. Bulgarians' dissatisfaction

with the status quo takes some wildly diverse forms.

Ousted Communist dictator Todor Zhivkov, now 84, has outlived the initial euphoria that accompanied the end of one-party rule in eastern Europe to see himself embraced by much of the local media as a benign grandfatherly figure.

In May nostalgia for an older era erupted when exiled King Simeon II returned to Bulgaria for his first visit in 50 years. Ecstatic crowds of well-wishers greeted 59-year-old Simeon and his Spanish wife Margarita as they toured the country.

The king, who lives in Madrid, has hinted that he might try to reclaim the throne the Communists took from him in 1946 in a rigged plebiscite that declared Bulgaria a republic.

Most commentators agree that a restoration of the monarchy is unlikely in the foreseeable future and opinion polls show a majority of Bulgarians

prefer a republic despite their high regard for King Simeon as a dignified and intelligent man.

But what kind of republic should it be? "If this is the best republic on offer we're better off with a monarchy," said Valeri Naidenov, editor of the Kontinent newspaper in an appeal for a strong executive presidency.

"Despairing of the chaos which our constitution has created, the population has taken to dreaming of a firm hand. This means above all radical change of the state structure," he said.

Mr. Zhelev, who like Poland's Lech Walesa has embodied his country's rocky transition to democracy, says the alternative to a presidential system could well be military dictatorship, given the depth of Bulgaria's economic crisis.

But both the BSP and the anti-leftist opposition parties dismiss his warning as sour grapes — the last salvo of a man whose time has passed.

LETTERS

Lesson from Lebanon

To the Editor:

AFTER VISITING beautiful Lebanon, I came to realise that the outstanding characteristic of Lebanon, other than its mountains and sea, is the spirit of the people.

These are people who have lived through and survived a war. The perseverance and will to succeed is evident in the massive reconstruction process. Lebanon provides premium services and is a country made up of superlative businesses and businessmen. The government adopts a laissez faire policy and this is the key to the country's excellence.

After Lebanon I started thinking of why Jordan lags behind. The answer came quite quickly: our government is too big and too inefficient. Of the list of ministries we have in Jordan, I believe only the Prime Ministry, the ones for foreign affairs, information, justice and public works and housing are essential. Scrap the rest and there will no longer be a deficit.

Reduced taxes that would allow people to make more money will benefit the whole society. Times are tough for the average man and he was not to see a peace dividend.

Accelerating progress and improvement is a collective must for the country to prosper.

Basim Najjar, Amman.

Features

Jordan Times, Sunday, July 28, 1996

Peres: Even at the price of controversy and struggles, the most moral thing to do is to serve my people

By Dahn Barak

At the end of the interview, I asked Shimon Peres to choose a picture that signifies something to him, and take a slightly different photo session. The elegant Peres — I had difficulty in recalling a picture of him without a jacket — agreed to go with it. He chose to be a walk on Tel Aviv's seaside promenade. And then was beset by the security people: "You can't do that at such short notice!" You have to notify the chief of Tel Aviv Police to take out a police unit, to close the beach...

At the end a compromise was reached, but this situation only demonstrates the position of this man more than anything else: despite the fact that the future of the peace process is in question, since Benjamin Netanyahu took control of the government in Israel, this has no bearing on the price the person who pushed it steadfastly (Peres) has to pay, since the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, security measures have been stepped up to assure his safety from attack by Arab extremists or Jewish extremists, but he continues to believe, "The peace," he tells me in resignation, "is not a credit-card; you pay and you immediately get the product. First you pay, and then..."

And he pays and pays on all fronts, starting with the hermetic security measures required for his safety and ending with the cries of impatient would-be heirs or people acting on their behalf who call to him: "Shimon, go home already!"

An Israeli television crew waiting in his office at the end of my interview ran after me and did not let go: "What did he say to you? Did he say he's going? What's he waiting for?"

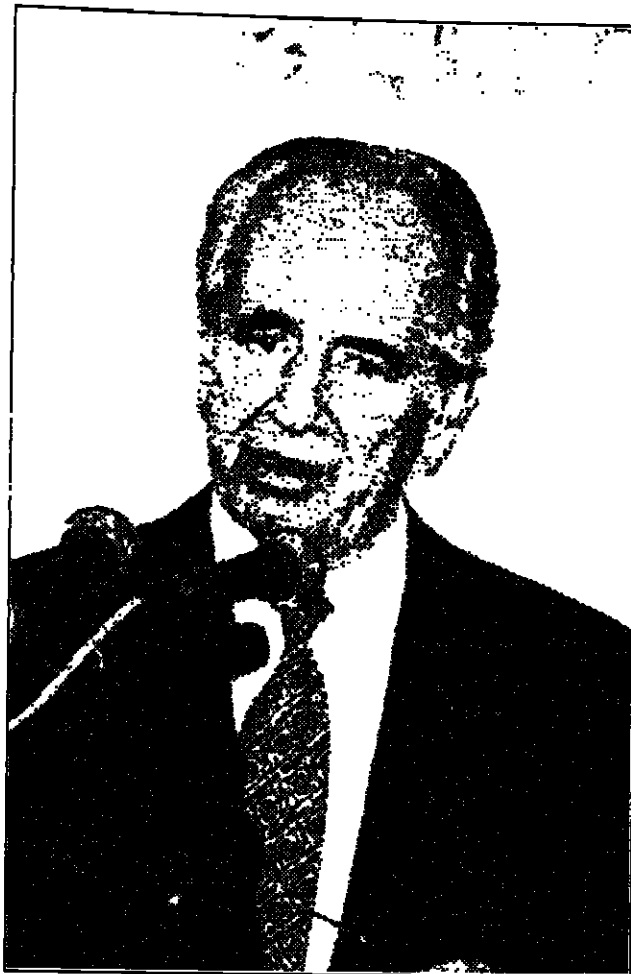
And Peres, I got the impression, is not about to go yet. And for a reason that is clear to him: peace. "It is still not at our threshold, and there is so much that needs to be done for it. That is it. It is just that simple!"

Now here is how my interview went:

Question: Let's give a definition: What is a politician?

Answer: There is no such thing... It is actually like being an artist, a doctor. Every politician is a world on to himself, each one chooses his own course. A good politician is a person who serves a cause that is greater than himself. A bad politician... is a person who thinks he himself is the greatest cause of all.

Q: When you were a boy



Shimon Peres

— what did you want to be?

A: I wanted to be a poet or an architect. A poet builds messages out of words. Always, the building interested me more than the use. I was interested in building up a power base, it interested me more than the use of such a base.

Q: You've recently been labeled with an image: "the dreamer" — maybe by the opponents of peace.

A: That depends very much on the period. For many years it was claimed that I am a man of action, a man with no vision at all... Tell me, what is image? It does not interest me. Politicians are measured by their record. If you check you'll find out that I dreamt many dreams, but in the morning I always acted.

Q: Let's go back to your defeat in the last elections. Many, including yourself, have written it off as a public relations flop, but maybe the Israelis are simply not ready for peace yet?

A: Look, I had to wage two campaigns: one — internal, the campaign the party was waging, and the second — against Hamas. The campaign against Hamas cost me and my party 20 per cent of the votes in the elections. The four terrorist attacks and the Hizbollah's running wild in the north lowered the support we received in one place, for example, from 16 per cent to 11 per cent!

Q: Shimon Peres, five years from now — where

will you be?

A: I do not think that way. I think how the Middle East will look five years from now.

Q: You are part of it... **A:** I do not think I have any real personal ambitions. I have been slandered in every possible way. I have been praised in every possible way.

Q: At any rate, practically, how will you promote peace? Where will you be? **A:** I think an idea has a tremendous impact. For instance, the message of the "New Middle East": This is a concept that some opposed, some slandered — it was the cause of the rising of political forces both in Arab countries and in Israel. I will continue to fight for it with all my strength. It should be remembered that half of the people in Israel voted for me!

Q: Benjamin Netanyahu doesn't believe in "land for peace". Can a peace like his be achieved? **A:** No! He is deluding himself and all the others if he thinks peace can be achieved with Syria and with the Palestinians without returning land — he is dreaming!

Q: The Syrian foreign minister said recently in an interview that if you would have been a bit quicker, peace could already have been achieved between Syria and Israel.

A: I agree with him!

Q: Yes, I told the Syrians:

"If you want peace in 1996, I am ready. But it was impossible to reach it with the committees advancing by turtle-steps. If you are participating in a horse-race, you cannot advance by turtle-steps."

Q: If the elections had turned out in your favour, where would the peace process be today specifically?

A: We would have implemented the redeployment in Hebron, we would have been negotiating today with the Syrians about water, territories, economics, the quality of peace, we would have been on the way to solving the problem in Lebanon...

Q: Regarding Hebron, you could still have redeployed there before you transferred the government to Netanyahu!

A: But I had a tremendous burden, you forget! Terrorism would have gone rampant then in Hebron also (if we would have returned it) and then we would have completely lost the elections. We agreed on June 14. The transfer of the government took place on June 17. Are 3 days worth talking about?

Q: You have been labelled "a loser."

A: I have been standing, for the past 19 years, at the head of the Ha'avoda (Labour) Party. Of those 19 years, for 10 years we were in power and for nine we were in the opposition. We did tremendous things when we were in power: from the agreement with Jordan, through withdrawing from Lebanon and up to the lowering of the inflation. I know people who have won elections and then missed the opportunities. I know people who have lost elections and have managed to turn losses into opportunities...

In most of the confrontations that took place between me and the late Yitzhak Rabin I won, but I was very glad he won in 1992 because otherwise they would have made my life impossible. It turned out that they made his life impossible and I was able to deal with peace... An image, or a label, is like the weather forecast... it has no retroactive value.

Q: Do you regret having advanced the date of the elections (after Rabin's murder)?

A: Since I was young, I have made many mistakes, but no, that was not a mistake. No!

Q: Since Netanyahu entered the prime minister's office, there have been many cracks referring to his third wife, about his family.

Is it appropriate for Israel to have a first lady? A first family?

A: No! In my opinion it is better to separate between family and public life. Absolutely — it is impossible, but it depends on the wife's character. Some leaders enjoy showing off a happy family life — I can say confidently that my wife Sonia is admired more than I am in spite of the fact that she does not appear in public.

Q: Unlike Mrs. Netanyahu!

A: So opposite to everything concerning her...

Q: If she would have appeared, maybe your popularity would have risen?

A: I don't have to market a wife in order to win the elections. It is her prerogative not to make public appearances and she has enjoyed popularity on the basis of her personality and the things she has done. And not because she is pushing herself into the camera...

Q: Which Arab leaders phoned you after the results of the elections became known?

A: From Egypt: Hosni Mubarak, Amr Musa, Ossama Al Baz, Mustafa Khalil (the former prime minister of Egypt). From Jordan I received very nice letters from the King, from Crown Prince Hassan, from the prime minister. I received letters from many Arab countries that I do not want to mention... it is personal. Yasser Arafat? Yes, I spoke with him. Everyone expressed sorrow, disappointment.

Q: Have you spoken with Bill Clinton since then?

A: And do you know that Clinton did not sleep the whole night of the elections! I spoke with him now, when I visited the United States. I had a very long conversation with him. He is very worried. I received letters from John Major, from Jacques Chirac, from Boris Yeltsin, from India, from Indonesia, from Japan. I received about 15,000 letters. It is an amazing thing. I have answered thousands of letters and I have not finished half. I do not think anyone who ever lost an election ever received so many letters...

Q: Small compensations?

A: Listen, Henry Kissinger phoned me and said: "There is no prophet in his own city..." George Bush, Jimmy Carter, Warren Christopher, Boutros Ghali — who didn't write?

Q: Bill Clinton received a lot of criticism for having endorsed you during the election campaign!

A: He did not endorse me

because of the colour of my eyes, but because of the policy I represent. What is wrong? It is not a sin if an American president supports a policy of peace.

Q: How will the potential election of Bob Dole influence the peace process?

A: I have no comments on what is happening in America.

Q: So you have learned

"Clinton did not sleep the whole night of the elections! I spoke with him now, when I visited the United States. I had a very long conversation with him. He is very worried."

Clinton's lesson of not interfering in the elections of another country... (Silence).

Q: Is there anyone in the Israeli Labour Party who is currently capable of leading Israel?

A: There are a few candidates who are ready to lead the country today.

Q: Who are they?

A: When the time is ripe, I will speak. I will say to whom I support, but I do not want to clothe him in a striped shirt before the time is ripe...

Q: When I interviewed Bob Dole I asked him an identical question: Is a mature age a factor in an election campaign?

A: I know some elderly people who have young thoughts, and I know some young people who are the captives of old thoughts.

Q: Do you think of old age?

A: I'm not occupied with age. For the past 50 years I have been waking up at 5:30 in the morning. I do not take a vacation. I do not feel weakened.

Q: I am sure you are aware of whisperings around you.

A: I am not interested! If it hurts me? No. Look, most of the Israeli press think it is imperative to criticise. At the same time, there is such a difference between the letters and the press articles... In all the 15,000 letters there was not even one letter of criticism.

Q: A day in the life of Shimon Peres, at this point in time — how does it look?

A: I get up at five in the morning, I exercise for 15

minutes at home. That is the way it has been for 30 years. When I was young, I suffered from back aches. Since I have been exercising, the pains have disappeared. After that, I read the newspapers. If I have time, I read a book. I continue reading in the evening. I reach the office at seven in the morning. Usually, my working day is finished at eleven at night. If I have a chance, I try to rest in the afternoon. I always prefer eating at home, both because of Sonia's food and because of the strict security I am obliged to have. I do not feel like spoiling the atmosphere at any restaurant...

Q: Describe the last vacation you took.

A: It was two weeks ago. I was in Beit Givri on the Sea of Kinneret (A lake in the north of Israel). I love Kinneret very much. I wrote the speech for the ceremony in Philadelphia at which I received the Peace Medal. In the evening, I went out for a stroll on the shore of the Kinneret. I like walking, I like swimming.

Q: Rabin's assassin meant to assassinate you as well. Do you think of death?

A: I am not afraid! It does not occupy my thoughts, it does not interest me.

Q: Do you believe in destiny?

A: No! Not in the stars and all that... How do I explain the fact that Rabin was murdered (and I was not)? Chance.

Q: The chief editor of an Arab newspaper said to me: "Peres, Rabin and King Hussein, even Yasser Arafat — they developed a friendship between themselves. The problem is that they ran too far ahead of their peoples."

A: That is true. I believe leaders must run ahead of their peoples! It is true. Listen to a story: One of the letters I received was written by a disabled 17-year-old boy who has spent his whole life in a wheelchair. He writes to me: "I have a disability from birth, but I am not sure I would want to be rid of my disability. I am not sure I could cope with the world without my disability."

This youth had a blind girlfriend. He continues: "She also does not want to see the light of day. She does not know how she will cope with the sun, she is afraid..." The Israeli people, continues the boy, "are afraid of making peace, they are afraid of getting out of their wheelchairs..."

Q: Turkey and Israel signed an agreement on military cooperation that is considered a threat by certain parties in the Arab World.

A: Whether it will become something practical? The direction interests me more than the sense of power, of being in control.

Q: How will you be able to promote peace from the opposition?

A: We are a bloc of 52 members in the Knesset. We do not have majority.

Q: And you do not have a tradition of being a fighting opposition...

A: You should know that liberal forces fight with less fanaticism than the forces of the extreme right...

Q: Hand on your heart: The Syrians, were they really and truly ready for peace?

A: But what is a peace partner? It is an enemy. I believe Assad wanted peace.

Q: Did you speak with him?

A: No, no. Not directly.

Q: Shimon Peres, in one sentence — what type of person are you?

A: A person whose brain brought him to the conclusion that the most moral thing to do — even at the price of controversy and struggles — is to serve his people.

A: In the Islamic World there are two schools: the fundamentalist school that wants to return the Muslims to the darkness of the Middle Ages, and the modern school. The fanatic school is headed by Iran. The modern school is headed by Turkey. No, there is no war with Islam. Between the Turks and the Israelis there is not only a geographic proximity, there is also a shared history. We have not made agreements against anyone, but rather against something. I am the one who cultivated relations with Turkey, when I was still foreign minister.

Q: A coalition with the Likud government — is it on the agenda?

A: I do not think about a coalition. I think about the reason for its existence. Any coalition geared to the advancement of the peace process is OK with me.

Q: So it is on the agenda!

"The Israeli people are afraid of making peace, they are afraid of getting out of their wheelchairs..."

Economic misery scars war-wrecked Kabul

By Alistair Lyon
Reuters

KABUL — Niaz Mohammad, a skeletal, anaemic two-year-old, fights for his life in a Kabul hospital ward, with glucose and saline solution dripping into his arm.

"The prognosis is not good, but he might live," says Mohammad Younis Ismat, director of the Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital.

Every week the hospital admits about 70 severely malnourished children, their desperate condition the most visible evidence of poverty and hunger among Kabul's one million or more people.

"Fifty to 60 per cent of children are suffering mild or moderate malnutrition and one or two per cent are severe cases who need hospital treatment," Asmatullah Arab, a senior official at the Public Health Ministry, told Reuters.

Since the fall of a communist government in April 1992 Kabul has endured factional fighting that has

wrecked much of the city and killed or wounded tens of thousands of people.

Growing economic hardship now compounds the misery of living under the daily threat of rockets, bombs and bullets in a city deprived of electricity, running water and other basic services.

Rampant inflation, linked to the collapsing value of the afghani, the local currency, has made it hard even for people lucky enough to have jobs to eke out a subsistence.

The afghani has plummeted to about 15,500 to the dollar from 5,500 at the beginning of the year, while public employees earn an average monthly salary of about 80,000 afghanis.

President Burhanuddin Rabbani's government, which controls only five of Afghanistan's 33 provinces and has hardly any sources of revenue, fuels inflation by freely printing money.

"The Afghan economy is now mainly agriculture. But we can't tax farmers, we don't control any borders to collect customs and

exports are less than 10 per cent of their pre-war level," said a government official, who asked not to be named.

"We have no other income except ordering container loads of banknotes from Russia," he acknowledged. "People have lost confidence in the Afghan currency due to the speedy inflation. This makes the gap between rich and poor more visible, and life is hell for people without access to foreign exchange."

Western aid workers say the summer months, when crops are harvested, have brought some relief after a bitter winter when Kabulites found the cost of food and fuel soaring out of reach.

"Although shops are full and food is available, due to the increased devaluation of the afghani and prices still remaining very high, more and more people are not able to purchase their daily requirements," said Thomas Gurner, deputy head of mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

He said concern was

already growing about how tens of thousands of vulnerable families can be fed and adequately sheltered from the cold in a few months' time.

"We certainly fear that next winter is going to be as harsh, if not harsher, than the last one," Mr. Gurner said.

The ICRC now plans to extend its food aid programme to cover 30,000 families, up from 15,000-20,000 at the start of the year.

Mr. Gurner said that ICRC surveys over the past seven years had shown a steady, but chronic deterioration in the health of people in Kabul, especially children, whose growth may be stunted.

"We cannot talk of an acute problem of malnutrition... But you find more and more chronically, slightly malnourished children."

Afghanistan is one of the world's poorest nations. Afghans can expect to live 44 years and only 31 per cent are literate. Of each 1,000 children born, 164 do not reach their first birthday. Daily food intake is just 1,710 calories.

The U.N. Children's Fund, the World Health Organisation

and other relief agencies are helping the government organise mass immunisation campaigns in June and July, with the second round timed to coincide with the Atlanta Olympics for fund-raising.

The aim is to protect hundreds of thousands of children against polio, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus and measles, reduce their iodine deficiency and vaccinate mothers against tetanus.

Relief agencies say they are hard-pressed to raise money from international donors who have at times seemed to weary of Afghanistan's seemingly intractable conflict.

Martin Barber, outgoing head of the U.N. Office for Coordinating Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan, said that some progress had been made in rehabilitation efforts, but last winter in Kabul had shown that the improvement was fragile.

"The trigger for a real acceleration in the improvement of the humanitarian situation would of course be peace," he said. "And what every Afghan is waiting for is for the peace process to yield a real, positive benefit."



An Afghan mother holds her severely malnourished son in a hospital in Kabul (Reuters photo)

Aqaba port sees fall in Iraqi cargo during first half of this year

of formal floors in some members," said Zuhair Kaswani, a leading UAE stockbroker.

"Opening the door for foreign investors will also make them even busier and attract funds needed to finance privatisation," he told AFP.

Most Gulf states have said they are determined to give way to the private sector after decades of state domination of the economy. They believe this will ease their financial burden and invigorate their economies that have sharply slowed down over the past decade because of low oil prices.

Reforms over the past five years have boosted the private sector's share in the GCC economy to around 45 per cent from 40 per cent and officials said they expected the level to exceed 50 per cent in 2000. They noted the GCC private sector had the capability to spearhead economic activity given its vast wealth.

"GCC markets need to diversify to present a more realistic reflection of the region's economies," BIB said.

AMMAN — Iraqi food purchase via Jordan's Red Sea Port of Aqaba fell 28 per cent in the first half of 1996 as Baghdad delayed deals while it awaited the now concluded U.N. "oil-for-food" accord, businessmen and shippers said on Friday.

Jordan Shipping Agents Association figures obtained by Reuters show Iraq imported via Aqaba Port a total of 237,545 tonnes of three basic commodities — sugar, rice and wheat. That was a drop of 28 per cent from 330,655 tonnes in first half of 1995.

Wheat fell to 148,020 tonnes against 198,080 a year earlier, and sugar imports dropped sharply to 32,255 tonnes from 100,255. Only rice imports were up, by 77 per cent to 57,270 tonnes.

Shippers attributed the decline to Iraq delaying major grain deals before last May's deal which allows it to sell \$2 billion worth of oil over six months, on a renewable

basis, to buy food and humanitarian supplies.

However, Jordanian businessmen are now bracing for a period of renewed Iraqi cargo activity once food shipments start unloading at the port. Aqaba is a key unloading port under the oil-for-food deal and officials and shippers hope it will handle at least 30-40 per cent of the food purchases.

Optimism has also grown with recent assurances from senior Iraqi officials that they will mainly rely on Aqaba, although they will also make maximum use of the Gulf Port of Umm Qasr.

To boost Aqaba's competitiveness, Jordan will soon announce a substantial lowering of handling charges to include major incentives for Iraq-bound cargo, officials said.

It hopes it will counter competition from Israel's Mediterranean ports after a June transport deal raised worries that a trickle of cargo imported by traders via these ports could grow and undermine the port's long-term position.

The report showed that

Aqaba's total tonnage in the first half of 1996, including reexports to Iraq, dropped 3.6 per cent year-on-year to 5.35 million tonnes from 5.55 million.

Businessmen say imports fell with signs of an economic slowdown after a short-lived investment boom in some sectors.

Exports remained steady at around 3.1 million tonnes, but at least 2.8 million tonnes still comprised Jordan's main currency earners, phosphates and potash.

Aqaba's activity in 1995 rose 11 per cent to a total of 11,755 million tonnes, reversing a decline dating from the 1990-91 Gulf crisis.

It has suffered since most Iraqi cargo was halted with the imposition of a U.N. embargo on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in 1990.

Reexports to Iraq fallen to less than a quarter of pre-Gulf levels.

Iraq's total imports in 1995 reached 683,455 tonnes, up 77 per cent from 1994.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Formulate a new plan of action today which can help you to gain your goals with greater efficiency. You can quickly improve your career at this time if you use the advice provided by some knowledgeable person.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Be alert to changes today which are occurring in business and this can bring greater success to you in the days ahead. Later this evening will be good or you to meet with some authority figure and discuss a plan of action you have.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Better organizing your daily existence today can bring more success to your business. Be direct about stating your plans for the days ahead and stick to some game plan which you have developed under the authority of a bigwig.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) State your ambitions today and discuss them with others who can help you to attain them. Go to bed early tonight in that you

tative to further slash structural funds to poorer regions was averted after intense negotiations.

"It was pretty ugly up there," said one diplomat, referring to often heated bilateral talks aimed at brokering a compromise.

In practice, savings at the EU level are returned to the governments, hence the strong desire from countries such as France and Germany to curb expenditure.

"In drawing up the European Union budget for 1997, member states were mindful of the impact of commitments to it on their own national budgets" said Hugh Coveney, Ireland's budget minister and chairman of the EU budget council.

After years of hefty spending increases — often well above the rate of inflation — analysts say the difficulty the EU faces in


reducing expenditure owes much to political and economic imperatives of monetary union.

Agricultural spending still takes up the lion's share of the budget — roughly 50 per cent.

But in percentage terms, it has declined over the years and been replaced by a steady rise in structural funds to 25 to 30 billion ECUs that attempt to redress the balance between

THE BETTER HALF

Directed by Christopher Nupur



© 1994 by Christopher Nupur

rich and poor in Europe by building roads and other infrastructural projects in less wealthy regions.

For many of the recipients of such aid, which often goes to support large projects, the prospect of a cut-back carries enormous political risks.

"The Portuguese and the Spaniards are making a huge effort to join monetary union," says Peter Ludlow, director of the Brussels-

By Glasbergen



based Centre for European Policy Studies.

"If you started to cut back on their structural funds the political effect would be very strong indeed," he added.

A related concern for

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter at each square, to form four ordinary words.

ELBIG

MENGO

YIVELT

KRUTEY

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such countries is EU enlargement. The costs associated with incorporating central and eastern European countries at the end of the century is a question to which no one quite has an answer.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
by Herri Arnold and Mike Argriton

This is the tenth one. Which looks the best, Harvey?

THE RESULT OF SHOPPING FOR THAT PERFECT DRESS.

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

Drawn by Longfellow Williams, the cartoonist himself

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
by Henri Arnold and Mike Arglinton

This is the tenth one. Which looks the best, Harvey?



THE RESULT OF SHOPPING FOR THAT PERFECT DRESS.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Peanuts

AND HERE, RERUN, IS WHERE YOU'LL BE GOING TO SCHOOL..

KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THE SEVENTH GRADE..

THAT'S EIGHT YEARS!

WHEN I GET OUT, I'LL BE AN OLD MAN!

© 1980 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

Snyder

Andy Capp

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DST BY SYNDICATION INTERNATIONAL NORTH
AMERICA SYNDICATE INC.

YOO-HOO!
I'M BACK.

HI, PET. PUT THE
KETTLE ON—

WOULD YOU
DO IT YERSELF,
PET? YOU'VE BEEN
AWAY FOR A LONG
TIME. I'VE BEEN
WAITING ALL OVER.
I'LL HAVE AN HOUR
IN BED IF I CAN
MANAGE THE
STAIRS—

I'M GOING TO PUT
A STOP TO THESE
KETTLE TALKS OF
YOURS!

Mutt'n' Jeff

THE BATHROOM SINK WON'T RUN OFF!

DON'T CALL A PLUMBER, I'LL LOOK AT IT!

I THOUGHT SO -- BOBBY PINS!

MUTT! IT'S WORKING! NOW IT RUNS OFF!

IT'S NICE TO HAVE A MAN AROUND THE HOUSE!

© 1984 by J. K. Co. Inc.

Thousands
more jobs
at risk.
Philips
unions say

Sizzling end to swimming and start to athletics

Sri Lankan sprinter defeats Johnson in 400m preliminaries

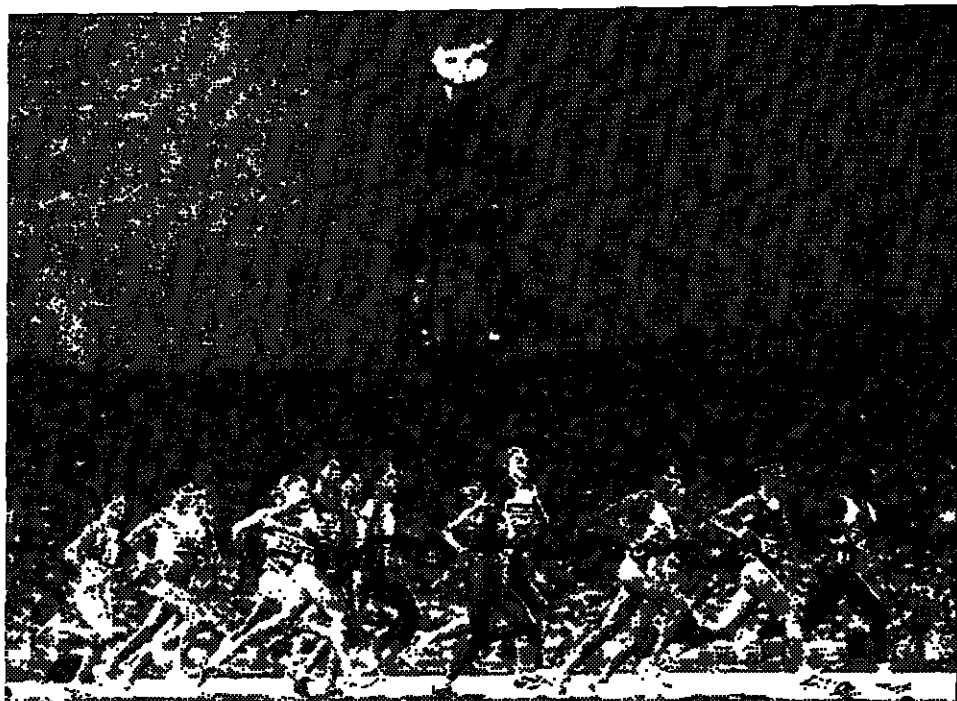
ATLANTA (R) — America's swimmers grabbed a world record and the last gold in the pool on Friday with a thundering men's 4x100 metres medley victory that gave the United States a clean sweep of the Olympic relay titles.

Ensuring the spotlight stayed on the Georgia Tech Aquatic Centre until the last moment, the U.S. Medley quartet touched in three minutes 34.84 seconds, beating the world Mark of 3:36.93 that the Americans set at the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

The hosts won all six Atlanta relay titles and 13 swimming golds overall, helping to put them at the top of the medals table ahead of Russia.

To add to the excitement, U.S. swimmer Amy Van Dyken beat Chinese world champion Le Jingyi to the women's 50 metres freestyle and won her fourth gold. Australia's Kieren Perkins retained his 1,500 metres title with an outstanding performance after only just qualifying for the final.

There was drama aplenty over at the Olympic stadium, too, on day one of the track and field.



The Olympic flame burns in the night sky as the second heat of the women's 5000 metre qualifying makes their way around the track July 26 during the first day of track and field competition. Over 160,000 fans viewed the track and field during a morning and evening session at the Olympic Stadium in Atlanta (Reuters photo)

Britain's Linford Christie, the 36-year-old defending champion, had no trouble reaching Saturday's 100 metres semi-finals along with fastest qualifier Frankie Fredericks of Namibia. Ato Boldon of Trinidad and Tobago, who

also had a superb run, promised a scorching final on Saturday.

"The winner of this final will, guaranteed 100 per cent, break the world record," he said. "There will be two men under 9.80 seconds." The record stands at 9.58.

Defending champion Gail Devers stayed on track to retain the 100 metres title she won in 1992 by breaking the 11-second barrier twice to make Saturday's semis.

Sri Lankan Sugath Thilakarame savoured a taste of Olympic immortality by defeating Michael Johnson in the first round of the Olympic 400 metres. Although Johnson almost stroled across the line to qualify comfortably.

Another unknown, North Korean teenager Kye Sun, muscled in on the action with a sensational win over Japan's seemingly unstoppable Ryoko Tamura to take Olympic gold in the extra-lightweight event on the last day of the judo.

In the opening athletics event, Ecuador secured their first Olympics medal of any kind when Jefferson Perez won the men's 20-km walk. Randy Barnes, who missed Barcelona because of a doping ban, won the men's shot for the United States.

Outside the sporting arena, the International Olympic Committee called for an end to drugs in the world, saying athletes were human beings with the same rights as anyone else.

Atlanta's Olympic tale of woe took a turn for the worse when cash-strapped street vendors filed a lawsuit and a basketball fan

sued organisers for illegal overcharging.

To add to the agony, Brazilian men's basketball coach Ari Vidal called the glitch-plagued games the most disorganised sporting event he had seen.

But Olympic chief planner Billy Payne brushed aside such criticism, declaring the event a hit and urging reporters to stop griping.

At the badminton, it was the lack of testing competition rather than glitches that upset top seed Ye Zhaoying.

"It's just ordinary," she said after demolishing Malaysia's Chan Chia Fong. "I'm not too happy."

Weightlifter Pyros Dimas of Greece, on the other hand, was ecstatic. "The Albanian immigrant destroyed his rivals with three world records to win the light-heavyweight class.

One of only 13 lifters to have won two Olympic golds and a rare showman in the sport, he whipped the audience into carnival mood with his antics after realising with his first lift he was going to retain his 1992 title.

Li Duihong won China's first shooting gold of the games in the women's 25-metre sport pistol. Compatriot Yang Ling then took the men's 10-metre running target title.

The three-day equestrian event came to a memorable climax. Reserve horse ready teddy, with no experience at international level, produced a clear final round to win gold for New Zealand's world champion Blyth Tait — himself a late replacement for compatriot and Olympic champion Mark Todd.

Dream Team crush China as Barkley steals the show

ATLANTA (R) — Phoenix Suns forward Charles Barkley stole the show on Friday without shooting a basket as the U.S. Olympic Dream Team went through its whole range of tricks on and off the court.

Barkley, rested for the 133-70 drubbing of China, won the biggest cheer of the night when he led the crowd in dancing to the village people's "YMCA" during a second half time-out.

The 34,000 crowd in the Georgia Dome chanted for Barkley to join the final stages of the game but he continued to rest nonchalantly on his elbows at courtside, chewing on bubble gum.

Coach Lenny Wilkens said Barkley was not injured but had been rested. "We wanted to give him a rest, save him," he said.

He was scarcely missed as the galaxy of American stars found their own rhythm to chalk up the third highest score in Olympic basketball history.

"We looked to play the game tonight and made a lot of things happen," said Wilkens, pleased his team had produced the goods after their first three matches, all easy wins, had drawn a muted reaction from critics.

"We still have a tendency to overpass but I think all the young players are fitting in well," he said.

Some of the Dream Team's speed of movement and passing was breathtaking but the lack of real opposition made the crowd restless and grateful for Barkley's courtside clowning.

Wilkens stressed the importance of winning the

Olympic gold once more — something the Americans have done 10 times in 12 previous games.

"This is not the all-star game. You want to enjoy the experience but you also want to win."

"We're not concerned what the Dream Team of 92 did or the (world championship) one in 1994. The goal is to win a gold medal. That's the bottom line."

Yugoslavia beat Brazil, top Group B

Undeclared Yugoslavia clinched the number one spot in Group B as expected with a 101-82 win against Brazil in the Olympic men's basketball tournament on Friday.

Every man on the Yugoslav roster played and all but one scored as they raced to a 10-point lead in less than three minutes and a 24-point lead at halftime.

Yugoslavia's Predrag Danilovic was the top scorer of the game with 21 points.

Brazil's Oscar Schmidt played for just 13 minutes in the first half because he said "the game was already at an end."

The 38-year-old, competing in his fifth Olympics, scored only six points in the first half. He came back for the last 7 1/2 minutes of the game "just to run" and reduce the margin of defeat, winding up with 14 points altogether.

Yugoslavia have won all four of their matches so far. Brazil (1-3) complete their preliminary round against South Korea, who have yet to register a win, and are then likely to face the all-conquering U.S. Dream Team in the quarter-finals.

What they're saying at the Olympics

ATLANTA (AFP) — What people are saying at the Atlanta Olympics:

"Now after three months in Cuba before the Olympics and having a good Cuban national coach we have overcome our fear of the Cubans, because no one is invincible."

Manuel Lopez, president of Filipino boxing after lightweight Mansueto Velasco beat Cuba's Yosvani Aguilera. "I managed to brainwash myself into thinking the gold medal was mine, and behind the blocks I was utterly focused and knew exactly what I had to do" — triple world record-holder Kieren Perkins after winning the 1,500 metre freestyle.

"This is a victory for all the nerds out there," twenty-three-year-old American Amy Van Dyken after she beat Chinese world champion Le Jingyi in the 50m freestyle. "Being famous takes some getting used to" — World triple jumper Jonathan Edwards after finishing well down in qualifying.

"I'll be staying in the games. I am sharing a room with Kelly Holmes and I will concentrate on encouraging her" — forty-year-old Tessa Sanderson after failing to qualify for the javelin final.

"If they can maintain that level throughout the competition, they should have no trouble taking gold and silver" — Chinese diving coach Xu Yiming after Fu Mingxia and Guo Jingjing qualified for the semi-finals.

"Pharmaceutical companies should help us. They should put markers in drugs to make them easier to test. They should tell us when they have a new drug that might cause problems." — track legend Carl Lewis calling on pharmaceutical companies to do more in the fight against drugs in sport.



ITV's Olympic coverage on Channel 2 for Sunday

Athletics (ladies marathon & preliminaries)	13:55 - 20:10
Rowing finals	16:55 - 19:45
Canoeing slalom finals	16:55 - 23:45
Cycling finals	18:10 - 21:45
Summary A (Channel 1)	20:20 - 22:00
Beach volleyball men's final	20:25 - 22:15
Equestrian team dressage final	21:55 - 00:45
Athletics 4 finals	22:35 - 05:30
Weightlifting 99-kg finals	22:55 - 01:00
Water polo final	23:45 - 01:15
Summary B (Channel 1)	01:15 - 02:15
Boxing preliminaries	02:55 - 03:25
Diving (men's springboard)	02:55 - 07:00
Gymnastics individual	04:25 - 06:45
Summary C (Channel 1)	07:00 - 08:00

Georgians cheered as Cuban boxers stumble

ATLANTA (R) — Two Georgians, the one-time Soviet Republic and the U.S. State, hailed their Olympic boxing heroes on Friday as two Cubans tasted defeat.

Georgian lightweight Koba Gogoladze first won a standing ovation by out-pointing Cuba's Julio Gonzalez Valladares, at 31 the oldest and least promising of the Cuban team, 14-9 to secure a place in the quarter-finals.

"It's all the same to me. As long as they're shouting Georgia it makes me happy," said Gogoladze, when told that maybe the crowd had a different Georgia on its mind.

He was then followed into the ring by middleweight Roshii Wells, a native of Atlanta, who won even greater applause from the crowd by beating Brazilian Ricardo Rodriguez 16-2.

Filipino light-flyweight Mansueto Velasco had earlier broken the ice by beating Yosvani Aguilera and becoming the first man at the Games to defeat a Cuban in the ring.

On Thursday, three Cubans reached the quarter-finals while two Americans lost. On Friday, the roles were reversed.

Reigning Olympic middleweight champion Ariel Hernandez, rated pound-for-pound the best amateur in the world, was the only Cuban to win through on a night to forget.

He eliminated Germany's Sven Otke 5-0.

The day's results left both Cuba and the United States level with four quarter-finalists each to date.

The Cubans could, although they may not want to, take the credit for one of their losses.

Velasco, the Asian champion, was coached by Aguilera's former Cuban coach Raul Fernandez and trained for three months on the Caribbean island before the Atlanta games.

"This is really a great day, not only for Filipino boxing, but for amateur boxing as well," said Philippines team leader Manuel Lopez, whose country has never won an Olympic boxing gold but clearly fancied its chances now.

"Everyone had the notion that you cannot beat the Cubans. I think we broke that rule," Lopez said.

The U.S. team, who have lost two of their men to the Cubans, will be hoping that proves the case.

Lightweight Terrance Cauthen was booed from the ring after beating Mongolian Tumensetsec Ulumen 10-9.

South African light-flyweight masibulele "hawk" Makepula, who carried the flag for his country at the opening ceremony last week, felt the burden of a nation's expectations fall upon him as he lost to Spain's Rafael Lozano 14-3.

"I want to say sorry for the people of South Africa. I was fighting for my country, not for myself," he said.

completed an American record haul of four golds in a single games and subjected world record-holder Le to a rare defeat.

Le, world 50 and 100 freestyle champion and record holder for both long and short course, had won the opening Atlanta swimming gold in the 100 freestyle.

She appeared to be heading for another victory but Van Dyken just edged her out at the final touch, winning by just 0.03 of a second in 24.87.

In the men's 200 backstroke Bridgewater took charge on the second length with Schwenk, for years his rival in the pool, in inevitable attendance.

ATLANTA (R) — Kieren Perkins cast his misfortunes aside on Friday to retain the Olympic 1,500 metres freestyle title which had looked destined to slip from his grasp.

The Australian world champion, who had looked increasingly vulnerable in the past 18 months, recovered his great powers of old in a remarkable victory on the final day of the Olympic swimming programme.

Fellow Australian Susan O'Neill had earlier crushed Michelle Smith's bold bid to match American Mark Spitz and East German Kristin Otto with four Olympic swimming titles at a single games with a comprehensive victory in the women's

200 metres butterfly.

The United States brought the seven-day programme in the Georgia Tech pool to a rousing end by setting a world record in the men's 4x100 metres medley relay to leave the host nation way ahead in the medals table with 13 titles.

It was a great day for the Americans, with Amy Van Dyken beating China's formidable world champion Le Jingyi in the women's 50 metres freestyle and Brad Bridgewater and Tripp Schwenk, who had been racing together since their early teens, produced a one-two romp in the men's 200 backstroke.

But it was the seemingly miraculous revival of

Perkins triumphs against the odds

Perkins which supplied the most compelling spectacle of the evening.

Perkins, who carried all before him with three world records and two world titles in 1994, managed to qualify only for the 1,500 in April's national trials.

He almost failed to make the Atlanta final with an insipid showing in the heats which saw him through by a meagre 0.23 of a second as slowest qualifier.

But the 22-year-old Australian was a changed man in the final, taking immediate charge in the outside lane eight and

stretching way ahead of all his rivals for a victory which left onlookers wondering why they had ever doubted him.

Perkins won in 14 minutes 56.40 seconds, fully 25 seconds faster than in the heats, with fellow Australian Daniel Kowalski (15:02.43) just touching out Britain's Graeme Smith (15:02.48) for the silver.

"That was just the hardest swim I've ever done," said Perkins, the first man to retain the Olympic 1,500 title since American Mike Burton, winner in 1968 and 1972.

"In Barcelona I did what came naturally. Here I knew what could go wrong and this is far sweeter. It's difficult to explain what it means after what's happened in the last couple of years."

Kowalski, bronze medalist in the 200 and 400 freestyle, added a silver to his Olympic collection but Friday was not the day for the heir apparent to usurp the throne of king Perkins.

Australia, who had not won all week, had remedied that in emphatic style when O'Neill finally claimed her gold in a one-two win with

Petria Thomas in the women's 200 butterfly.

Bronze medalist at the 1992 Olympics and double bronze medalist in the 1994 world championships, O'Neill had finished fifth in both the 200 freestyle and 100 butterfly in Atlanta.

But there was no doubting her winning resolve on Friday when she subjected the previously invincible Smith to her first Atlanta defeat and relegated Liu Limin and Qu Yun, the Chinese pair who beat her for gold and silver in the world championships, to fifth and fourth.

"All those bronzes and fifths can be thrown aside now. I have been aiming for this for all my career," said O'Neill, who won in 2:07.76 — 2.06 seconds ahead of Thomas and 2.15 ahead of Smith. "All my dreams have come true."

Smith, the 26-year-old Irishwoman who has made an astonishing advance since Barcelona, was far from disappointed with her bronze having thought she might miss the race as her goggles snapped and she had to borrow another pair.

"It has been a tough week. I have surpassed all my dreams," she said.

Van Dyken, gold medalist in the 100 butterfly and sprint freestyle and medley

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL: 634144 PHILADELPHIA Mel Gibson & Sophie Marceau ... in BRAVEHEART winner of 6 Academy Awards Shows: 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00	CINEMA TEL: 669238 PLAZA Adel Imam stars in Sleeping in Honey (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 Toy Story 5:00 p.m.	CINEMA TEL: 677420 CONCORD CONCORD "1" Jim Carrey & Jeff Daniels Dumb and Dumber Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" BRAVEHEART Shows: 3:45, 6:45, 9:45	Amman Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274 - 618275 Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government Starring comedians: Mahmoud Saimah & Hussein Tubeishat play starts 8:30 p.m.	Nabit & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights at 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155 - 640155
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ports

1996

Atlanta 1996

olympic schedule Sunday, July 28

Yugoslavia beat Brazil, top Group B

Georgians cheered as Cuban boxers stumble

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olympic schedule Sunday, July 28

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Georgians cheered as Cuban boxers stumble

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Atlanta



Atlanta 1996

Olympic coverage continues for Sunday

Olympics schedule for Sunday, July 28

ATHLETICS

Women's 5,000 final
Women's 10,000 final
Men's 110 hurdles, 1st round
Women's 400 hurdles, 1st round
Women's discus throw, qualifying
Men's hammer throw, final
Men's long jump, qualifying
Men's high jump, final
Women's heptathlon, final
Javelin throw, final
Men's 110 hurdles, 2nd round

Men's 800, 2nd round
Women's 800, 2nd round
Women's 400, semifinals
Men's 400, semifinals
Women's 5,000 final
Women's heptathlon, 800 (final)

BADMINTON

Men's and Women's doubles, quarterfinals
Men's and Women's singles, quarterfinals

BASEBALL

South Korea vs. Netherlands
U.S. vs. Cuba
Nicaragua vs. Australia

BASKETBALL (Men)

China vs. Lithuania
Australia vs. Greece
Yugoslavia vs. Puerto Rico
Brazil vs. South Korea
Argentina vs. Angola

BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Men's gold and bronze medal match

BOXING

Flyweight, light welterweight, and light heavyweight 2nd round

CANOE-KAYAK

Men's canoe doubles slalom, 1st run to final
Men's kayak single slalom, 1st run to final

CYCLING

Men's and Women's points race, final
Men's sprint, final
Women's individual pursuit, final

DIVING

Men's springboard, prelims
Open, team dressage 3rd and 4th round

GYMNASTICS

Men's floor exercise, final
Women's vault, final
Men's pommel horse, final
Women's uneven bars, final
Men's rings, final

ROWING

Men's and Women's lightweight double sculls, final
Men's lightweight coxless four, final
Men's and Women's quadruple sculls, final
Men's and Women's lightweight double sculls, final

SOCCER

Men quarter-finals
Women's semifinals

TABLE TENNIS

Men's singles, 2nd round

TEAM HANDBALL

(Women)
Angola vs. South Korea
China vs. Denmark
U.S. vs. Hungary
Germany vs. Norway

TENNIS

Men's singles, 3rd round
Men's and Women's doubles, 2nd round

VOLLEYBALL

(Women)
Japan vs. China
Brazil vs. Germany
South Korea vs. U.S.
Ukraine vs. Netherlands
Cuba vs. Russia
Peru vs. Canada

WATER POLO

6th-place to gold medal games

WEIGHTLIFTING

99kg, Group B
99kg, Group A final

YACHTING

Open Star, Open Soling, Men's Mistral and Women's Mistral 9th and 10th; Open Laser and Women's Europe 7th, 8th races.



Yugoslavia's Dejan Savic (bottom) and Croatia's Damir Glavan (top) battle for the ball during a water polo match at the XXVI Summer Olympics. Croatia won the match by a score of 8-6 (Reuters photo)



The medalists in the mens 1500m freestyle event display their medals July 26 at the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center. From left to right: Daniel Kowalski (Australia) Silver; Kieren Perkins (Australia) Gold; Graeme Smith (Great Britain) Bronze (Reuters photo)

Medals table after the 8th day of competition

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
United States	16	18	5
Russia	13	9	6
China	7	7	6
Italy	5	5	5
Australia	5	4	8
Poland	5	3	3
Germany	3	9	13
Cuba	3	4	6
Japan	3	4	2
South Korea	3	4	2
Hungary	3	2	5
New Zealand	3	1	1
Turkey	3	0	1
Ireland	3	0	1
Belgium	2	1	2
Ukraine	2	0	3
South Africa	2	0	1
Romania	1	2	3
Greece	1	2	0
North Korea	1	1	1
Kazakhstan	1	1	1
Yugoslavia	1	0	1
Armenia	1	0	0
Costa Rica	1	0	0
Ecuador	1	0	0
Bulgaria	0	3	4
Belarus	0	3	2
Finland	0	2	0
Brazil	0	1	4
Canada	0	1	3
Spain	0	1	2
Britain	0	1	1
Sweden	0	1	1
Austria	0	1	0
Uzbekistan	0	1	0
Netherlands	0	0	5
Czech Rep.	0	0	1
Georgia	0	0	1
Mexico	0	0	1
Moldova	0	0	1
Mongolia	0	0	1
Slovakia	0	0	1

Thai brothers in quarters

ATLANTA (R) — Thai brothers Somluck and Somrot Kamsing continued their joint march towards the medals at the Olympic boxing tournament Saturday when Somluck reached the featherweight quarter-finals. Somrot Kamsing won through to the last eight in the light-flyweight division on Friday to stand just one fight away from being guaranteed at least a bronze medal. Somluck marched him by beating South African Phillip Ndou 12-7 in a fight that he led from the opening round. He told Thai reporters that the first round, in which he was knocked down but still won 4-3, had been tough. "It was not a nice fight."

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College De la Salle (Frere) is in need of a biology teacher for the academic year 1996 - 1997. The applicant should be a university graduate, majoring in biology with at least three years of experience in teaching biology in the secondary section in both Arabic & English languages. Personal interviews will be held in the school, Jabal Al Hussien on Monday 29th of July from 9:00 a.m. till 1:00 p.m.

Kersee pulls out of heptathlon

ATLANTA (R) — Jackie Joyner-Kersee of the United States, who had been aiming for a third successive Olympic gold medal in the heptathlon, pulled out of the competition with an injury after the first event Saturday. The American won her 100 metres hurdles race in pouring rain at the Olympic stadium but was noticeably limping towards the end and announced she had withdrawn shortly afterwards. Joyner-Kersee, who is 34, has been one of the most successful female athletes in history and had said before the

games that it would be her last Olympics. There was no immediate word about her injury or whether she would also withdraw from the long jump in which she is also entered. Joyner-Kersee won a silver medal at the Los Angeles Games in 1984 in the heptathlon and took the gold medal in Seoul four years later and in Barcelona in 1992. She also won the long jump world titles as well as holding the world heptathlon record.

Jordan out of shooting, high jump events Kawar starts athletics competition in discus today

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

JORDAN'S MOHAMMAD Al Qasem Saturday finished at a disappointing 49th place out of 54 participants in the men's skeet championship on the 9th day of the Atlanta Olympic Games. Italy's Ennio Falco of Italy won the gold medal with a perfect score while Miroslaw Rzepkowski of Poland took the silver medal and Andrea Benelli of Italy the bronze. While Al Qasem finished the event with 112 out of 125 points, his form seemed to deteriorate after he ended the first round in which he scored 18 out of 25. However he then scored 25, 22, and 23 before scoring 24 in the fourth round and only 18 in the final. After Al Qasem's participation, Jordan's Nada Kawar

starts athletics competition in the discus event today (Sunday). High jumper Fakhruldin Fuad failed to clear the 215 cm bar yesterday. Fuad only managed 210 cm while his Jordanian record is 222cm. Thirty-six competitors participated in the preliminaries including world champion Cuba's Javier Sotomayor. Jordan's swimmers Omar Dallal and Mira Gheimeh took part in the 400 metre freestyle and 200 metre individual medley. Dallal set a new Jordanian record in the event slashing 6.50 second of the mark to finish the event in 4.41.12 seconds while Gheimeh failed to match her record and finished with a time of 2.56.99, 6.83 seconds behind her Jordanian record. Jordan was to have competed in judo too. However, Walid Al Awazem was disqualified after failing to show up for the weigh-in.

Britain's Redgrave rows to share of Olympic history

ATLANTA (AFP) — British oarsman Steven Redgrave became the fourth sportsman in history to win gold at four straight Olympics when he and Matthew Pinsent won the men's coxless pairs here Saturday. His historic achievement came in the first final to be held following a bomb attack at the downtown centennial Olympic park that left two people dead and 111 injured. Barcelona champions Redgrave and Pinsent won in an Olympic record 6min 20.09 secs to defeat Australians David Weightman and Robert Scott by .93 of a second and bring the British their first gold medal of these Games. "They were never going to catch us," Redgrave said. "We took it from the start. It was quite a good row. We're absolutely knackered." Pinsent, 25, raised both fists in triumph as Redgrave sat slumped over with exhaustion at the front of the boat after the triumph. Redgrave, 34, joined American discus thrower Al Oerter, Danish yachtsman Paul Elvstrom and Hungarian fencer Aladar Gerevich as the only competitors to win events at four consecutive Games. Redgrave, who won the coxless pairs with Andrew Holmes in 1984 and 1988,

said this was the finish for his rowing career. "I have definitely had enough. This is it for me," he said. "If anyone sees me near a boat, they can shoot me." Australia also claimed gold for the first time when Kate Slater and Megan still won in 7:01.39, edging the U.S. duo of Karen Kraft and Missy Schwen by .39 of a second. "It was awesome, bloody hard work but really awesome," still said. Australians Drew Ginn, James Tomkins, Michael McKay and Nicholas Green later added a coxless fours gold medal. Canadian Silken Laumann, who made an

14-year-old follows in Evans' footsteps

ATLANTA (R) — So long Janet, welcome Amanda. As Janet Evans retires after nine years at the top of swimming, a young clone is ready to take her place as the American darling of the pool, Amanda Beard. Beard won two individual silvers and a relay gold at the Atlanta Olympics with a breaststroke based more on guts and thrashing white water rather than style. The 14-year-old couples an outstanding talent with a wide-eyed, open-as-a-book, all-American attitude to life that could make her as big a star as Evans. Surrounded by journalists before her first swim in Atlanta, Beard was asked what had impressed her most about the Olympics. She thought for a while and finally decided it was the large room full of cabbage patch dolls she had seen in the village. How did she feel after her gold in the 4x100 metres relay? She replied "really good" and then proceeded to tell excitedly how when she got home she was going to buy two rabbits and call one silver and the other gold. She already has quite a menagerie. Beard, with big eyes and blindingly white teeth, is

cute. Not in the manufactured way of gymnasts like Dominique Moceanu, but like Evans was when she burst on the scene with two world records in 1987 aged just 15. Evans's smile and obvious enjoyment of swimming made her a media star overnight. She won three gold medals at the Olympics in 1988, a year in which she set four world records. She won another gold in 1992 but missed out in Atlanta where she roomed with Beard, who carries a good-luck teddy bear to all her races. Evans, who has now retired, says Beard reminds her a lot of herself as a youngster. She has taken Beard under her wing, even showing her how to use a washing machine in the Olympic village. Their swimming styles are also similar. Evans's thrashing freestyle looked so inefficient when she was young no one could believe she could move so fast. Beard, still slim and bony, raises herself out of the water in a frenzied thrash in the final stages of a race. Her pursuit of gold medalist Penny Heyns of South Africa over the last 60 metres, when more than two seconds down in the 200 metres breaststroke, was one of the bravest swims of the Olympics. She lost by just 0.34 seconds. The one, maybe crucial, difference between the two is that Evans at 15 seemed worldly-wise while Beard is achingly naive. When this reporter wanted to interview Evans in 1987, she looked up, took her headphones off and said: "I don't like this track, you've got four minutes."

JOB OPPORTUNITY

A leading Jordanian Company in cooperation with the University of Chicago, are seeking self motivated and dynamic individuals for the position of Research Director, two researchers and one assistant researcher. The Research Director will help establish and head an independent research centre focusing on social and policy issues pertaining to the rights of children.

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Private sector firms volunteer payment of bread subsidy

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Less than 20 days since the government announced plans to float bread prices and "rechannel" bread subsidy, a number of banks and private sector firms have announced plans for payment to their employees and their dependents of the JD 1.28 monthly compensation for the increase in prices.

Among the businesses that volunteered the payment were the banks, the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company, the Jordan

Phosphate Mines Company, the Arab Potash Company, the Jordan Cement Factories Company, and the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce.

On Saturday the Jordan Press Foundation, which publishes the Jordan Times and Al Ra'i announced it was following suit and paying its 350 employees the monthly compensation for the bread subsidy.

Earlier this month the government announced that it will provide the subsidy on bread in cash to every Jordanian national. The price of bread is expected to rise from 80 fils a kilo to

250 fils.

"The government will pay each and every Jordanian the price difference before announcing its decision," Minister of Information Marwan Muasher said last week.

In remarks published by Al Dustour daily Saturday Minister of Finance Marwan Awad said that all government employees and army and security services personnel as well as the retired have the cash subsidy already added to their July pay cheques.

"All measures concerning the payment of the subsidy have been finalised at the

Ministry of Finance and the payment will be made to all people. No date, however, has been fixed yet for floating the prices," the minister was quoted as saying.

"The government has pledged its keenness on protecting its credibility and will honour its commitment concerning the bread subsidy and its channelling it to the Jordanian people," he added.

Mr. Awad said that the government would soon market new kinds of bread which contain bran and which will be sold for less than 250 fils a kilogramme.

King Hassan avoiding Netanyahu for time being

From the Jerusalem Post

MOROCCO'S KING Hassan is avoiding any direct contact with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu because of Mr. Netanyahu's stance that Jerusalem's status is not negotiable, according to Robert Assaraf, one of the leaders of the Jewish community in Morocco.

Mr. Assaraf said that the king is waiting to see what direction the Likud-led government will take — particularly concerning Jerusalem — before meeting with Mr. Netanyahu.

King Hassan refused Mr. Netanyahu's request to visit him in Morocco on a return trip from the U.S. last week.

King Hassan also declined to accept a telephone call from Mr. Netanyahu after his election in May.

Mr. Assaraf, who is well-connected to the Moroccan royal court said King Hassan has always considered the issue of Jerusalem as the most complicated and difficult point of the peace negotiations.

"His Majesty is behaving as a leader of an Arab state and as a spiritual leader of the Muslim Nation," Mr. Assaraf explained. "Beside his efforts to promote the Arab-Israeli peace process during the last 20 years, the king has always considered solving the problem of Jerusalem essential for the Muslim World."

"Hassan believed that negotiations over the status of Jerusalem would start soon, as foreseen by the Oslo agreements.

Declarations made by Netanyahu, before and after his election, concerning the future of the peace process and especially the future of Jerusalem, have changed the situation. Once the question of Jerusalem was put aside by the new Israeli government, it put a brake on the possibility of a meeting between the king and Netanyahu."

Mr. Assaraf ruled out the idea that the king is boycotting the new government, saying, "the king is a practical and pragmatic man. He wants to find out

what he could eventually discuss with the new Israeli prime minister."

King Hassan is not looking to disconnect himself from Israel or from the peace talks, Mr. Assaraf said, but "in order for an intervention on his behalf to be productive and serious, he must know on what Netanyahu intends to negotiate."

Mr. Assaraf denied that the king's attitude toward Mr. Netanyahu is based on the fact that King Hassan wanted Shimon Peres to win the election, and that he supposedly called on Israelis of Moroccan origin to vote for Mr. Peres.

Damascus-based PLO groups meet Kaddoumi

DAMASCUS (R) — Leaders of Damascus-based radical Palestinian groups met a senior PLO official on Saturday, two days after Palestinian President Yasser Arafat met President Hafez Al Assad on his first visit to Syria since 1994.

George Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh met Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's political department, who was present at the Assad-Arafat meeting on Thursday, Mr. Kaddoumi's spokesman Anwar Abdul Hadi said.

"Talks tackled recent developments and ways to put into order the Palestinian affairs inside and outside Palestine and the positive and excellent results of the Syrian-Palestinian summit which opened a new page in the relations," he said.

Mr. Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Mr. Hawatmeh's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) are key members of a Damascus-

based alliance of 10 Palestinian groups opposed to PLO's peace with Israel.

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Assad, who had denounced PLO's 1993 peace agreement with Israel as capitulation, discussed ways of reaching a common policy towards Israel's new headline Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who opposes trading land for peace. Mr. Arafat said the talks were "important, useful and positive."

"This period requires the achievement of Palestinian unity and everybody feel its dangerousness as (Netanyahu's) Likud government refuses the basis of the just and comprehensive peace," Abdul Hadi said.

PFLP spokesman Maher Al Taher said Mr. Habash, in the meeting with Mr. Kaddoumi, stressed the necessity of reversing the cancellation of the Palestinian national charter, scrapped in April in line with PLO-Israel peace accords because parts of it denied Israel's right to exist.

TWA jet continued flight after black boxes stopped recording

EAST MORICHES, New York (AFP) — The TWA jetliner that exploded last week continued its flight 26 seconds after the jet's black boxes stopped recording, investigators said Saturday, indicating the aircraft appears to have broken in two. Federal investigators have yet to indicate the cause of the explosion that sent TWA Flight 800 plunging into the Atlantic waters off the coast of Long Island, New York July 17, but they seemed to be leaning toward theories of sabotage.

Radar continued to track the aircraft for 26 seconds after the plane's cockpit voice recorder registered what investigators described as a "loud unknown noise" before ending abruptly, said Norm Wiemayer, a specialist with the national transportation safety board that is leading the probe.

At the end of the 26 seconds, radar picked up "multiple targets" at the same time as witnesses on the ground reported seeing a ball of fire plunge into the sea.

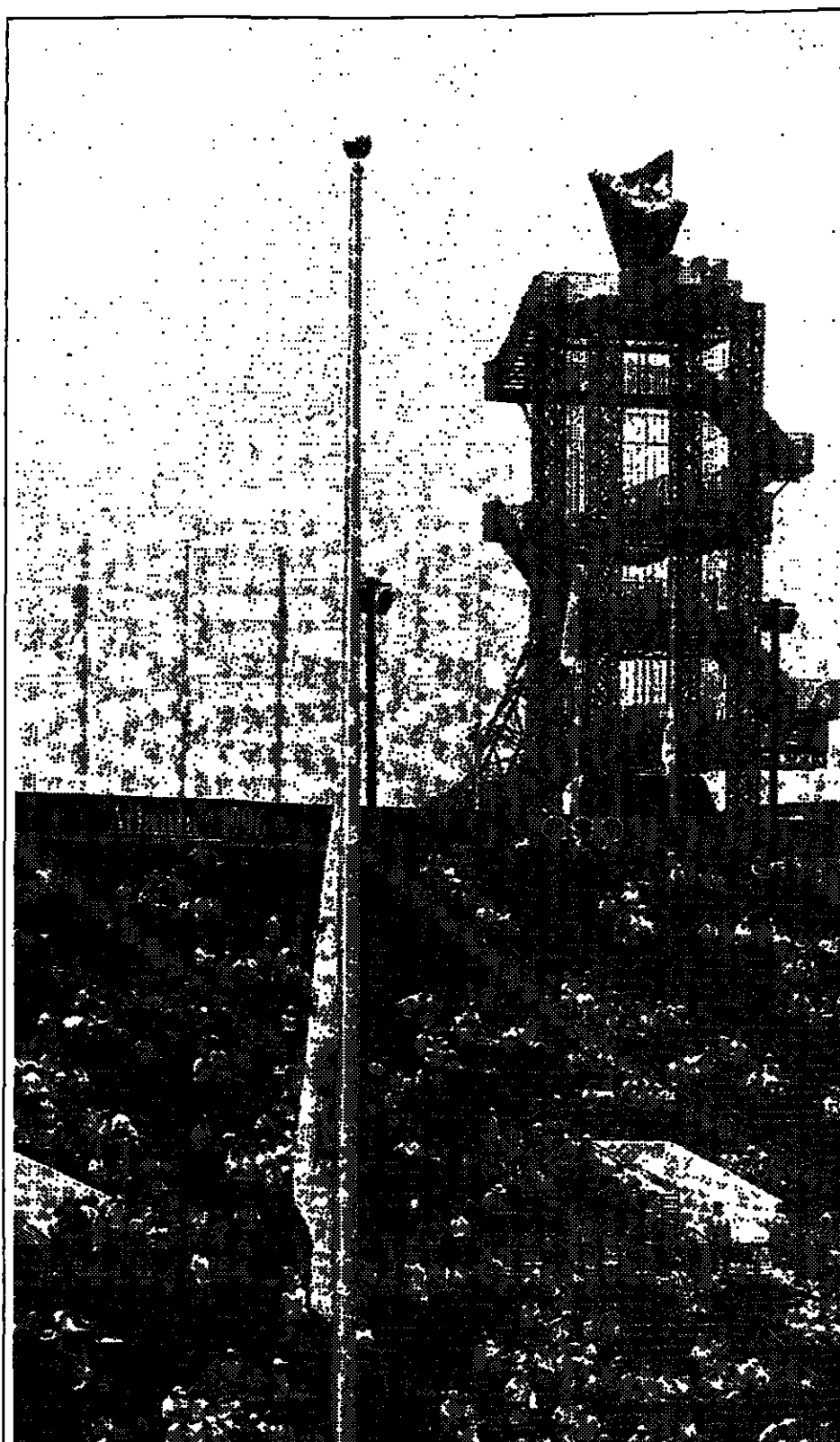
"We do have some information that there was something in the sky... ascending" at the time of the explosion, said FBI Assistant Director James Kallstrom, pointing to the possibility of a missile attack on the plane.

The other theories under consideration are that a bomb exploded on board the Boeing 747 or that a mechanical malfunction was to blame for the blast.

NTSB Vice Chairman Robert Francis declined to comment on a possible link between the TWA explosion and Saturday's bomb attack in Atlanta that led to the death of two people. In Washington, White House spokesman Michael McCurry said there was no reason to believe the two events were tied.

Searchers reported 143 bodies had been retrieved from the waters south of Long Island by early Saturday.

At least two other bodies have been spotted with a laser detection system and several others are believed to be trapped beneath the wreckage, investigators said.



OLYMPIC FLAG HANGS AT HALF STAFF AT THE OLYMPIC STADIUM: The Olympic flag hangs at half staff with the Olympic Flame burning in the background at Olympic Stadium the morning after a pipe bomb exploded Saturday in Centennial Park killing two and injuring over 100 Olympic fans. Authorities are considering the incident an act of terrorism and are continuing their investigations, but have no leads. Olympic officials said the Centennial Games would continue as planned despite the attack. (See story page 1) (Reuters photo)

Jewish groups hold mass rally in Sabbath campaign

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Tens of thousands of ultra-orthodox Jews demonstrated peacefully on a main Jerusalem street Saturday as part of a campaign to enforce more respect for the Sabbath, the Jewish day of rest.

The protest on Bar Ilan Street was authorised by police who barred traffic from the road, a four-lane thoroughfare running through the heart of the city, for three hours.

Hundreds of police, armed with batons, lined the road as the protesters, dressed in traditional 18th century robes and black hats, chanted "Shabbos" — Sabbath in Yiddish.

Police water cannon were also positioned discreetly at the scene.

Several hours before the protest some of the Jewish fundamentalists threw stones at vehicles using the street, but did not cause any accidents.

It was the fourth week running ultra-orthodox Jews have taken to Bar Ilan Street to demand it be closed to traffic during the Sabbath.

Protests in previous weeks ended in violent clashes between the orthodox Jews and left-wing counter-protesters, as well as with the security forces.

But internal security minister Avigdor Kahalani, under pressure from the religious parties in the right-wing coalition government, called for police "restraint" in the handling of this week's protest, and the ultra-orthodox protesters deployed 800 marshalls of their own.

Secular Jews accuse the ultra-orthodox community of trying to impose their way of life on the whole of Jerusalem and say they are determined to fight the "religious coercion."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bosnians evict Serbs from army flats

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian federation police have evicted dozens of people, mainly Serbs, from former Yugoslav Federal Army (JNA) apartments in Sarajevo, the U.N.'s main humanitarian agency said on Saturday. Most of the flats are in parts of Sarajevo that reverted to Bosnian government control under the 1995 Dayton peace treaty after 43 months in the hands of separatist Serbs. Kris Janowski, spokesman in Bosnia for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, said people were being kicked out of the flats even though they had valid owner-occupancy papers obtained from the JNA in the late 1980s. The JNA built the apartments when Bosnia was a member of the Yugoslav republic, before it seceded in 1992. "This problem is growing. It's significant because it embodies broader issues of multi-ethnicity, law and order and human rights in (postwar) Bosnia," Mr. Janowski told reporters.

Libyan referee still alive — paper

DUBAI (R) — A Malta-based Libyan who refereed a soccer match in Tripoli which turned violent this month was alive and being questioned in Libya, a London-based Arabic newspaper said on Saturday. Al Sharq Al Awsat quoted reliable Libyan sources as saying that Abdullah Salem "...who the Libyan authorities consider one of those responsible for the riot at the soccer game was still alive in Libya and is under custody being questioned." The Maltese Times newspaper said on Friday that Mr. Salem, 35, has not returned to the island and his fate is not known. Mr. Salem lived and worked in Malta. Earlier this month, he travelled to Libya to take charge of the ill-fated match between Al Itihad and Al Ahly in the Libyan capital Tripoli. Diplomats say the trouble broke out after Mr. Salem awarded a dubious goal to the team which Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi's sons supported.

'Israel should compensate Cana massacre'

CANA, Lebanon (AFP) — Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid on Saturday said Israel and the international community should compensate the families of the victims of the Cana carnage. Dr. Abdul Meguid was speaking in the South Lebanon village where an Israeli bombardment on April 18 of a refugee-packed U.N. base killed 103 people and wounded hundreds of others. "We must put pressure on the nations to compensate for the victims of the Cana massacre. It is the least we can do at the Arab League," Dr. Abdul Meguid said after placing a wreath at a mass grave for the victims. Denouncing Israel's "savagery" Dr. Abdul Meguid said those responsible for the Cana carnage should be put on trial like those responsible for war crimes in Bosnia.

Clinton rejects Pollard request for pardon

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton rejected the second request for a pardon made by lawyers for an American Jew serving life in prison for spying for Israel. White House spokesman Michael McCurry announced Friday. Jonathan Pollard — a former U.S. Navy analyst — was convicted of treason in March 1987 for passing military secrets to the Jewish state. Mr. McCurry reported that Mr. Clinton "agreed with Attorney General Janet Reno's judgment that the enormity of Mr. Pollard's offences, his lack of remorse, the damage done to our national security, the need for general deterrence and the continuing threat to national security that he posed make the original life sentence imposed by the court warranted." The president also concurred that "to shorten the sentence at this time after (Pollard) has served only ten years ... is unwarranted and would deserve the goal of deterrence."

COLUMN

'Prince Charles buys friend \$39,000 ring'

LONDON (R) — Heir to the throne Prince Charles has bought his friend, Camilla Parker Bowles, a £25,000 (\$38,860) ring, possibly signalling the couple plan to become engaged, a British tabloid reported on Saturday. The Daily Star said there would now be speculation about which finger Parker Bowles would put it on when the prince gives it to her on Aug. 28, the day his divorce from Princess Diana is due to become final. A spokesman for Prince Charles was not immediately available for comment on the report. British media has been speculating on whether the prince will marry Parker Bowles ever since it became clear that his 15-year marriage to Diana was on the rocks. Any such move would be deeply unpopular among Britons and could undermine his chances of succeeding his mother, Queen Elizabeth, on the throne, opinion polls have showed. The royalty-obsessed Star reported that the prince bought the ruby and diamond ring from the traditional London jewellers Asprey's. Quoting friends of the prince, it said Asprey's sent a selection of rings to the prince's Highgrove Country house in western England for him to choose from. "This is a deliberate move by the prince to formalise the relationship," the Star quoted one of the "friends" as saying.

Holidaymakers treated to steak by protesting French farmers

MOULINS, France (AFP) — Holidaymakers in central France were treated Saturday to free lunch by livestock farmers hoping to get their pro-beef message across, police said. Several dozen farmers took over a section of highway for several hours Saturday and handed out about 500 meals of the French standard beef and fries to delighted motorists. The farmers took the opportunity of explaining their lot to the vacationers as the fallout from the "mad cow" disease crisis has dampened demand for beef in France. Slogans written on the road said "farmers in danger" and "consumers, react."

Nine-year-old takes family car for 100 kilometre drive

BUCHAREST (AFP) — A nine-year-old boy took the family car for a 100-kilometre drive with his six-year-old brother in northern Romania without being stopped by police, the daily Curierul National reported Saturday. Ionut Raduta, and his brother Gheorghe, were only picked up wandering around the town of Botosani earlier this week after they had ditched the car. They had driven all the way from Iasi, 100 kilometres away. "My father was the one who taught me to drive. I don't understand the road traffic signs but I just did what the other cars were doing," Ionut told police. The two children said they had run away because they were being badly treated at home.

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Interesting offer from Arab Bridge Maritime Co. For passengers residing within the Ports of Aqaba and Nuweiba, We announce to passengers and tour offices, that the Company will have new scheduled trips of fast Boat Turbo Cat.

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** Trip times :

First Trip : * Dep Aqaba Port at 10.30
* Dep Nuweiba Port at 12.30
Second Trip : * Dep Aqaba Port at 14.30
* Dep Nuweiba Port at 16.30

In addition to that, the Ferry Boats (F/B), Santa Catherine, Concord will be making two Daily trips according to the following schedule :

First Trip : * Dep from each ports Aqaba, Nuweiba at 12.00 Hrs.
Second Trip : * Dep from each ports Aqaba, Nuweiba at 19.00 Hrs.

In addition to 15% special discount, which include minimum 20 Persons, with fast boat

Please come (1.30) Hours before departure

For more information Please Contact

(A.B.M. CO) Aqaba Tel : 03-313235-7, 313140, Fax : 313238

Whishing you a Bon voyage.

